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*Carthage in*  
*Virgil's Aeneid*

*Staging the Enemy under Augustus*

ELENA GIUSTI





## Carthage in Virgil's *Aeneid*

Founded upon more than a century of civil bloodshed, the first imperial regime of ancient Rome, the Principate of Caesar Augustus, looked at Rome's distant and glorious past in order to justify and promote its existence under the guise of a restoration of the old Republic. In doing so, it used and revisited the history and myth of Rome's major success against external enemies: the wars against Carthage. This book explores the ideological use of Carthage in the most authoritative of the Augustan literary texts, the *Aeneid* of Virgil. It analyses the ideological portrait of Carthaginians from the middle Republic and the truth-twisting involved in writing about the Punic Wars under the Principate. It also investigates the mirroring between Carthage and Rome in a poem whose primary concern was rather the traumatic memory of Civil War and the subsequent subversion of Rome's Republican institutions through the establishment of Augustus' Principate.

ELENA GIUSTI is Assistant Professor of Latin Literature and Language at the University of Warwick. She previously taught Classics at the Universities of Glasgow and Cambridge, where she was Research Fellow in Classics at St John's College.



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Staging the Enemy under Augustus

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ELENA GIUSTI

*University of Warwick*



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... *Maioribus*

to my four grandparents: Fernando, Maria, Oscar and Renata  
especially Maria, who taught me historical analogy when  
commenting on Berlusconi: ‘I never liked *the other one* either’.

Sorting out how the past, and its past, was to be told, lay at the heart of the politics of the Augustan present.

John Henderson, *Polishing off the Politics*

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The doctoral thesis from which this book originated was written in a context of displacement. It was the result of three years of life in a foreign country, entwined with the worries of the post-Berlusconian chaos that I struggled to leave behind. As such, it is no coincidence that the research combined my ongoing concerns about autocratic regimes in disguise and their mechanisms of propaganda with the issue of rebuilding one's identity through contacts with cultural others, as well as with the risk of losing one's identity at the adoption of bilingualism. While I intended to try and make the work less personal and less liable to support anachronistic readings before showing it to the academic world, I found myself turning it into a book in 2016. Uncanny as they are, the book's contents around history rewriting and truth-twisting under an autocratic regime speak to me even louder than when I started conceiving of the project. So just like the book itself, the debts that I have amassed are personal as well as academic.

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## ABBREVIATIONS, EDITIONS AND TRANSLATIONS

- EV* F. Della Corte (ed.) (1984–91) *Enciclopedia Virgiliana* (6 vols.), Rome.
- OLD* P. G. W. Glare (ed.) (2007 [1982]) *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (2 vols.), Oxford.
- VE* R. F. Thomas and J. M. Ziolkowski (eds.) (2013) *The Virgil Encyclopedia* (3 vols.), Chichester; Malden, MA.

The text of the main authors is cited from the following editions unless otherwise indicated:

- De Melo, W. (2012) *Plautus: The Little Carthaginian, Pseudolus, The Rope*, Cambridge, MA.
- Garvie, A. F. (2009) *Aeschylus Persae*, Oxford.
- Klingner, F. (1959) *Q. Horati Flacci Opera*, Leipzig.
- Mynors, R. A. B. (1969) *P. Vergili Maronis Opera recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruxit R. A. B. Mynors*, Oxford.
- Paton, W. R. (2010) *Polybius: The Histories*, revised by F. W. Walbank and C. Habicht, Cambridge, MA.
- Walters, C. M. et al. (1914–1965) *Titi Livi Ab Vrbe Condita*, Oxford.

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## INTRODUCTION: TRACTATIO, RE-TRACTATIO, REVISIONIST HISTORY

... what a change there has been! Clio, Muse of History, has moved massively into the territory of her tragic sister Melpomene.

Jasper Griffin<sup>1</sup>

### How (Not) to Handle History: Horace's Ode to Pollio

Writing under Augustus was no easy task. Think of the poets Cornelius Gallus and Ovid: the former fallen into disgrace by the emperor allegedly for his haughty behaviour as prefect of Egypt and driven to suicide in 27–26 BCE,<sup>2</sup> the latter relegated to Tomis, on the Black Sea, in 8 CE, because of a *carmen* and an *error*, a poem and a mistake.<sup>3</sup> There is also Titus Labienus, an historian of Pompeian cause nicknamed 'Rabienus' because of the *rabies* ('rage') of his writings, who committed suicide around 6 CE on hearing that his whole work had been sentenced to flames (Sen. *Controu.* 10, praef. 4–8) – just like the *oeuvre* of the orator Cassius Severus relegated soon after Labienus' case for having divulged *libelli* which allegedly defamed 'illustrious men and women' (Tac. *Ann.* 1.72).<sup>4</sup> An earlier, and even more intriguing, character is the politician, playwright and historian Asinius Pollio, certainly one of the most distinguished men writing history under Augustus, and a predecessor of Labienus in his supposed *ferocia*, 'fierceness' (Tac. *Ann.* 1.12), glossed by Cassius Dio as παρρησία, 'free

<sup>1</sup> Griffin (1999) 74.

<sup>2</sup> But Dio 53.23 also mentions that Gallus divulged a gossip about Augustus; see also Suet. *Aug.* 66.2, *De Gramm. et Rhet.* 16, Jer. *Chron. ad Ol.* 188.17, Amm. Marc. 17.4.5.

<sup>3</sup> Ov. *Tr.* 2.207.

<sup>4</sup> On both Labienus and Severus see Pettinger (2012) 88–93.



speech' or 'outspokenness' (Dio 57.2.3). And yet even Pollio's bluntness seems to have had a limit. Whether or not a convinced partisan of Augustus, Pollio wisely justified his choice not to reply to some satirical verses addressed to him by the emperor in an almost proverbial manner: *non est enim facile in eum scribere qui potest proscribere*, 'for it is not easy to write against one who can proscribe' (Macr. 2.4.21)<sup>5</sup>

Satire, for sure,<sup>6</sup> but history, too, had to be handled carefully in the early Principate. Especially the history of the Civil Wars, those between Pompey and Caesar first, and Antony and Octavian next, a genuine minefield for Augustan authors, whether poets or historians. This, at least, in the absence of the histories of Asinius Pollio and Livy on the late Republic, is all we can evince from Horace's advice to the former in the poem that opens his second collection of *Odes*, the so-called 'Ode to Pollio'.<sup>7</sup> In the opening stanzas of the poem, Civil War history has become more and more like a weapon, 'a dangerous gambling game of dice' (6 *periculosae plenum opus aleae*), which Pollio must 'treat' or 'handle'<sup>8</sup> (7 *tractas*) accordingly:

Motum ex Metello consule ciuicum  
bellicue causas et uitia et modos  
ludumque Fortunae grauisque  
principum amicitias et arma

<sup>5</sup> Bowditch (2001) 64–5, T. S. Johnson (2009) 316 n. 9. See Bosworth (1972) for doubts over the extent of Pollio's anti-Augustanism.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Pollio's statement with Suet. *Aug.* 89.3 *componi tamen aliquid de se nisi et serio et a praestantissimis offendeatur*, 'but he [Augustus] took offence at being made the subject of any composition except in serious earnest and by the most eminent writers', and especially Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.18–20 *nisi dextro tempore, Flacci | uerba per attentam non ibunt Caesaris aurem, | cui male si palpare, recalcitrat undique tutus*, 'only at an auspicious moment will the words of Flaccus find with Caesar entrance to an attentive ear. Stroke the steed clumsily and back he kicks, at every point on his guard', with Tatum (1998).

<sup>7</sup> The best treatment of *Ode* 2.1 to this date is to my knowledge Henderson (1996), reprinted with some changes in Henderson (1998) 108–62. See also Nadeau (1980), Lowrie (1997) 175–86, Bowditch (2001) 72–84, Woodman (2003), T. S. Johnson (2009).

<sup>8</sup> On the double meaning of *tractas*, referring to both *opus* (*OLD* s.v. *tracto* 9: 'to deal with, discuss, treat') and *arma* (*OLD* s.v. *tracto* 2a 'to handle'), see Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 15 and Bowditch (2001) 76–7.

## Horace's Ode to Pollio

nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus,                   5  
periculosae plenum opus aleae,  
    tractas et incedis per ignis  
        suppositos cineri doloso.

paulum seuerae Musa tragoediae  
desit theatri: mox ubi publicas                   10  
    res ordinari, grande munus  
        Cecropio repetes coturno,

insigne maestis praesidium reis  
et consulenti, Pollio, curiae,  
    cui laurus aeternos honores                   15  
        Delmatico peperit triumpho.

(Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.1–16)

The civil strife that began with Metellus' consulship, the causes of the war, its blunders and phases, and the game of Fortune, the fatal friendships of the great, and the weapons, smeared with still unexpiated blood – a work fraught with the hazards of the dice – this is the theme you are handling, and you step over fires still smouldering beneath the treacherous ash. Do not let your stern tragic Muse desert the theatre for long; soon, when you have set public affairs in order, you will resume your great duty in Cecrops' tragic boots – you, a famous bastion of piteous defendants and of the Senate consulting you, Pollio, for whom the laurel brought forth evergreen honours in your Dalmatian triumph.

The hazardousness of history writing is the reason why Horace in the last stanza carves out a private space for himself, where he can 're-treat' himself in the *securitas* offered by the Augustan age:

sed ne relictis, Musa, procax iocis  
Caeae retractes munera neniae;  
    mecum Dionaeo sub antro  
        quaere modos leuiore plectro.

(Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.37–40)

But come, my naughty Muse, do not abandon your frivolity, and do not undertake again the duties of the Cean dirge. Join me in the grotto of Dione's daughter and let us think of tunes for a lighter plectrum.

As many have noted, this last stanza repropose in withdrawal many themes previously presented in the ode, linking Horace and Pollio in an inextricable bond:<sup>9</sup> the carefree games of private lyric (37 *iocis*) replace the whimsical game of Fortune which is seen to direct the course of history (3 *ludum ... Fortunae*); the rites paid to the dead in the form of poetic lamentations (38 *munera*)<sup>10</sup> recall both Pollio's cultural munificence (11 *munus*) and the human sacrifices offered to Jugurtha (28 *inferias*). The historian and the poet are united in a common decision to abandon the *tractatio* of Civil War, but their literary paths take opposite directions: the austere Muse of tragedy vs. the wanton Muse of monodic lyric (9 *seuerae Musa tragoediae*, 37 *Musa procax*), public vs. private (10 *theatris*, 39 *sub antro*), *coturnus* vs. *plectrum* (12 *coturno*, 40 *plectro*), grand style vs. Callimachean *leptotes* (11 *grande*, 40 *leuiore*). Finally, in opposition to Pollio's *tractatio* of history that had opened the poem, Horace highlights the importance of his *re-tractatio*, a real 'withdrawal'<sup>11</sup> from history and politics (38 *retractes*, fusing 7 *tractas* and 12 *repetes*).

*Retractatio* can indeed be taken as the appropriate heading to the practice of writing history in the age of Augustus. It does not just signpost the lyricist's withdrawal from treating history, but implies a rewriting,<sup>12</sup> 'correction' and 'alteration'<sup>13</sup> of history, induced by the fact that to recall one's own personal history after the Civil Wars is a painful internal process, comparable to picking at open wounds again and again (cf. Ovid *Tr.* 3.11.19 *et tamen est aliquis qui uulnera cruda retractet*, 'and yet there is one who keeps picking at my open wounds').<sup>14</sup> This view of historiography lies at the heart of the cause-and-effect connection between Punic and Civil Wars established in

<sup>9</sup> See Nadeau (1980) 180–1, Henderson (1996) 121 = (1998) 151, Lowrie (1997) 181.

<sup>10</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 30.

<sup>11</sup> *OLD* s.v. *retracto* A.

<sup>12</sup> *OLD* s.v. *retracto* B 'to handle again', 6c 'to reconsider'. Cf. T. S. Johnson (2009) 314: 'the lyricist contends that one never simply writes history, but always and inevitably rewrites history, a risky political venture'.

<sup>13</sup> Henderson (1996) 119 = (1998) 149. For Pollio ('Polisher') as a speaking name in this sense see Henderson (1996) 127 = (1998) 153.

<sup>14</sup> Which led to Peerlkamp's conjecture *uulnera* instead of *munera* (38).

Horace's Ode to Pollio and destined to become almost a leit-motiv in Lucan's *Bellum Civile*. The dead of the Civil Wars, winners *and* losers,<sup>15</sup> have become offerings to Carthaginian and African *manes*:<sup>16</sup>

Juno et deorum quisquis amicior  
Afris inulta cesserat inpotens  
tellure, victorum nepotes  
rettulit inferias Iugurthae.  
(Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.25–8)

Juno, and all the other deities who favoured the Africans, had withdrawn, powerless and furious,<sup>17</sup> leaving the soil unavenged, but now she has given the descendants of the conquered winners<sup>18</sup> as offerings to the shade of Jugurtha.

The *scelus* of Civil War is explicitly traced back to Juno/Tanit's eternal thirst for vengeance for the destruction of her beloved Carthage,<sup>19</sup> and the stanza thus stands as an explicit negation of that reconciliation of Juno foretold by Jupiter at *A.* 1.279–82 but already undermined at the very beginning of the *Aeneid*

<sup>15</sup> Henderson (1996) 106 = (1998) 140: 'VICTORUM, "THE CONQUERORS" = VICTORUM, "THE CONQUERED". Here "the winners" become and are "the losers".' On the possibility of a similar ambiguity in Horace's *Epod.* 10.12, see Giusti (2016b) 141.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Lucan 1.39 *Poeni saturentur sanguine manes*, 'let the shades of the Carthaginians be glutted with blood' and 4.789–90 *ferat ista cruentus | Hannibal et Poeni tam dira piacula manes*, 'let bloody Hannibal and his Punic shades accept this dreadful expiation', with discussion in Ahl (1976) 82–115. On Metellus Scipio's death as the offer of a Scipio to the Carthaginians' unsated thirst for vengeance exactly 100 years after the destruction of Carthage (146 BCE–46 BCE), see Lucan 6.309–11 *nec Iuba Marmaricas nudus pressisset harenas | Poenorumque umbras placasset sanguine fuso | Scipio*, 'the naked body of Iuba would never have fallen on Marmaric sands and Scipio would not have placated the Punic shades by spilling his blood', and 6.788–9 *deplorat Libycis perituram Scipio terris | infaustam subolem*, 'Scipio grieves that his wretched progeny should die on Libyan land'.

<sup>17</sup> On the double meaning of *inpotens* see OLD s.v. *impotens* 1 and 3, with Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 5 and Henderson (1996) 105 = (1998) 140.

<sup>18</sup> On the double meaning of *uictorum* see n. 15.

<sup>19</sup> See Feeney (1991) 116–17 and (1984) 183: 'Juno ... has a "mythological" motive for her hatred of the Aeneadae – the judgement of Paris and all the Homeric matter connected with the name of Troy ... and she has an "historical" motive, her predilection for Carthage and fear of the fate that awaits the city at the hands of Aeneas' descendants ... for the purposes of the first motive she is regarded as "Argive Hera", while for the purposes of the second she is viewed under the aspect of the Carthaginian Tanit.'

(*A.* 1.36 *Iuno aeternum seruans sub pectore uulnus*, ‘Juno, nursing an eternal wound deep in her breast’).<sup>20</sup>

Through the idea of the Civil Wars as a direct result of Carthage’s destruction, Horace and Lucan manage to express a genuinely historiographical concept in the guise of a tragic chain of guilt and retribution. It is highly probable that this idea was present in the *Historiae* of Pollio, the continuator of Sallust’s *Historiae* and a possible exponent of the so-called ‘tragic school of historiography’.<sup>21</sup> This view can indeed be seen as a development of ‘Sallust’s theorem’ of *metus hostilis*, according to which the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE, and the subsequent disappearance of that ‘fear of the enemy’ which is a necessary element of national unity, brought about the crisis of the Roman Republic which ultimately resulted in the shedding of brotherly rather than foreign blood.<sup>22</sup> A corollary of this implies that the Punic Wars not only led to the abolition of Rome’s arch-enemy, but also triggered the civil conflict which resulted from that very abolition, a consequence that Scipio Nasica had apparently predicted when he advised that, against Cato’s judgement, *Carthago seruanda esset*, ‘Carthage must be saved’.<sup>23</sup>

However, to deduce from these historical theories that the slaughters of Civil War must be interpreted as expiatory offers to Carthaginian ghosts is an extremely tragic

<sup>20</sup> As Feeney (1984) has shown, Juno’s reconciliation envisaged at *A.* 1.279–82 (already in Ennius’ *Annales*: Serv. ad *A.* 1.281) presupposes a denial of her reconciliations in *A.* 12.791–842 and in Horace’s Third Roman Ode.

<sup>21</sup> On tragic historiography, see p. 248–9 n. 144. I think it is beyond doubt that Horace establishes a connection between Pollio’s tragic and historiographical careers. However, it is much less safe to infer traits of Pollio’s historiographical method from *Ode* 2.1 only, as remarked by Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 9 and, similarly, André (1949) 61–4.

<sup>22</sup> Sall. *BC* 10.1–2, *BJ* 41.2, *Hist.* fr. 1.11 McGushin. ‘Sallust’s theorem’, also called, in modern political theory, the theory of ‘Negative Association’, was thought by some to have been derived from Posidonius but was actually something of a commonplace among ancient historians: see Earl (1961) 41–59, McGushin (1992) 77–9, Wood (1995), Evrigenis (2008) and Jacobs (2010).

<sup>23</sup> Diod. 34/35.33.4–6, Plut. *Cato Maior* 27, Flor. 1.31.5, App. *Pun.* 69 (see especially Diodorus 34/35.33.5 ἀπολομένης δὲ τῆς ἀντιπάλου πόλεως πρόδηλος ἦν ἐν μὲν τοῖς πολίταις ἐμφύλιος πόλεμος ἐσόμενος ... ἅπερ ἅπαντα συνέβη τῇ Ρώμῃ μετὰ τὴν τῆς Καρχηδόνης κατασκαφὴν, ‘but once the rival city was destroyed, it was only too evident that there would be civil war at home ... all this did indeed happen to Rome after the destruction of Carthage’). The debate between Scipio Nasica and Cato



turn to take. Tragedy, as I argue in this book, is the proprietary genre not only of the literary representations of Punic or Civil Wars in Augustan literature, but more specifically of their interconnections, of that relationship of cause and effect indicated by Sallust and probably endorsed by Pollio. While we can remain uncertain over the degree to which tragedy featured in Pollio's *Historiae*, we can easily see how it shapes Horace's adaptation of them. Blood imagery as the reminder of the necessity of expiation opens the ode (4–5 *arma | nondum expiatis uncta cruoribus*), a memory which takes us back to the close of Horace's *Epode* 7 and Rome's original, fratricidal guilt (*Epod.* 7.19–20 *ut inmerentis fluxit in terram Remi | sacer nepotibus cruor*, 'since the blood of innocent Remus was spilt on the ground, bringing a curse on his descendants'), modelled on the conception expressed by the chorus' cries in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* (Aesch. *Ag.* 1019–21 τὸ δ' ἐπὶ γᾶν πεσὼν ἄπαξ θανάσιμον | πρόπαρ ἀνδρὸς μέλαν αἷμα τίς ἄν | πάλιν ἀγκαλέσαιτ' ἐπαείδων; 'but once the black blood of death has fallen on the earth in front of a man, who by an incantation can summon it back again?'). The dice of Caesar (6 *periculosae aleae*, Suet. *Caes.* 32 *alea iacta est*, 'the die is cast!') marks a tragic point of no return,<sup>24</sup> while also blending with the dice of the *Agamemnon*'s watchman, whose result was wrongly interpreted as a good omen (*Ag.* 32–3).<sup>25</sup> Pollio 'arrives on the scene'<sup>26</sup> in a spectacular way, 'stepping solemnly over fires still smouldering beneath the treacherous ash' (7–8 *incedis per ignis | suppositos cineri doloso*). Soon afterwards, as Johnson puts it, 'the historiographer Pollio becomes a character on stage in present time, calling the infantry to battle with a blast that stuns ears'<sup>27</sup> (17–8 *iam nunc minaci murmure cornuum | perstringis auris, iam litui strepunt*, 'but now you grate upon our ears with the menacing

must have occupied a long section of Livy's Book 49, according to its *Periocha*; see Mineo (2011) 123.

<sup>24</sup> On this aspect of tragedy see p. 267.

<sup>25</sup> See Denniston-Page (1957) 69–70.

<sup>26</sup> *OLD* s.v. *incedo* 1.

<sup>27</sup> T. S. Johnson (2009) 317.

murmur of horns; now bugles are blaring'). Now, thanks to the *enargeia* of Pollio, Horace 'already seems' (21 *iam uideor*) to hear or see<sup>28</sup> the captains of this war. In this highly performative history, the spectator's imagination finds its own role in shaping the description and significance of the events.<sup>29</sup> In Horace's, and perhaps Pollio's, blending of Punic and Civil Wars, tragic vision appears inextricably linked to historical re-vision. There is no way to narrate, or allude to, Republican history without the hindsight of the fall of the Republic, which brings with it a history of traumas as national as they are personal. While the necessity to narrate the Punic Wars from a post-Civil War perspective turns Republican history into revisionist history, the personal implications that accompany the allusions to the history of the late Republic merge historiography, lyric and epic with the genre of tragedy.

### Why Should Hannibal Wear Boots?

Horace's Ode to Pollio is no isolated poem. Opening the book of *Odes* that does not talk about, but certainly hints at, the conspiracy of Caepio and Murena in 23 BCE,<sup>30</sup> it is an explicit *recusatio* from treating history, while it can also be read as an implicit hint at the fact that there is much that we are missing from the literature of the Augustan period. But if the extent of Augustan dissent was already better passed over in silence in its own time, it has become no less of a tricky topic to tackle nowadays. While it is generally safe to claim that opposition to Augustus did exist,<sup>31</sup> as well as to point out Augustus' deceit in

<sup>28</sup> *uidere* as the first word of line 21 is Beroaldus and Bentley's conjecture for *audire* of the MSS, printed by Shackleton-Bailey and accepted by Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 22. In defence of *audire*, especially in connection to the practice of *recitationes*, see E. Fraenkel (1957) 236, Lowrie (1997) 183, D. West (1998) 8, Woodman (2003) 202, Tarrant (2016) 307–9.

<sup>29</sup> See T. S. Johnson (2009) 317 n. 11.

<sup>30</sup> In the mysterious Ode to Licinius (*Ode* 2.10), see most recently Dressler (2016) with further bibliography.

<sup>31</sup> Although its extent is far from clear; see Raaflaub-Samons (1990) for a survey of the sources and an analysis of the possible reasons why it was ineffective, as well as possibly 'minimal'.

masking under the pretence of a ‘restoration of the Republic’ (*res publica restituta*) what we all know would eventually become an hereditary monarchic rule,<sup>32</sup> it is very difficult to understand from our extant sources to what extent, and since when exactly, the Principate became an authoritarian regime, and perhaps an oppressive one at that.<sup>33</sup> Whatever we mean by ‘Augustan’ literature, whether we make the period start with Octavian’s adoption of the name Augustus in 27 BCE, or with the end of the Civil Wars in 31 BCE, or even earlier, if we take Virgil’s *Eclogues* and Horace’s *Epodes* as already containing some main characteristics of their later works,<sup>34</sup> there is very little consensus over whether this literature displays some overarching characteristics that crystallise into a recognisable ideology of regime, that is a ‘coherent and all-embracing system of thought’ meant to promote the legitimacy of Augustus’ power, which cut across the whole period during which Octavian/Augustus ruled.<sup>35</sup> And even if we achieve consensus about the existence and the main characteristics of such ideology, at least for some specific themes and values recurrent in the literature and images of the time, we still have to take a stand on what role the poets played in creating and transmitting it, and whether the all-encompassing presence of these themes in the culture of the time makes it acceptable, rather than anachronistic, to refer to this ideology as propaganda.<sup>36</sup> Finally, even if

<sup>32</sup> Only in hindsight, according to Eder (2005) 15, and see Galinsky (1996) 42–79 for a defence of Augustus’ genuine intents in restoring the *res publica*. However, the idea that Augustus’ regime was a monarchy/[tyranny] in Republican guise, supported by Tacitus’ view in *Annals* 1, famously informed the account of Syme (1939), and has been long-lived in scholarship; see the more nuanced accounts of Wallace-Hadrill (1982) and more recently Le Doze (2015) with further bibliography.

<sup>33</sup> See recently Pettinger (2012) against the *communis opinio* that Augustus’ Principate was benign.

<sup>34</sup> See especially Geue (2013).

<sup>35</sup> I partly take the definition from Le Doze (2010) 260, who also emphasises the somewhat anachronistic use of the term for our context, and treats Augustan ideology at 284–8. Note that Zanker (1988) still remains the unavoidable point of departure for the understanding of Augustan ideology.

<sup>36</sup> The question is intertwined to the degree of anachronistic analysis in Syme (1939). On the anachronism inherent in talking about propaganda see Le Doze (2014) 19–38 with bibliography. I touch upon the issue in Giusti (2016c).

we recognise the works of Horace and Virgil as sharing, creating and transmitting such ideology or propaganda, it does not necessarily follow that we must think of this poetry as monolithically supportive of the new regime, especially when considering that Horace had fought on the opposite side to Octavian at Philippi<sup>37</sup> and that Virgil's family had had their land confiscated, but also restored, by the would-be Princeps.<sup>38</sup> Both examples, in fact, prove simultaneously Octavian's magnanimity as well as the traumatic personal consequences wrought in these poets by the Civil War in which he himself was implicated. Rather than stressing one aspect over the other, it seems more desirable to take the unstable dynamic between these two competitive views as itself the mark of Augustan poetry, in the same way as we may have to look at the difficult balancing between apparent opposites (e.g. Republic and monarchy, or continuity and rupture) in order to understand the nature of the Augustan Principate.<sup>39</sup>

While this book does not, and cannot, aspire to solve the long debated problems surrounding the age of Augustus, it is necessary to clarify from the start the assumptions on which I base my analysis of the uses and representations of Carthage and the Carthaginians in Virgil's *Aeneid*. First of all, this book is not concerned with the question of the degree of Virgil's partisanship towards the regime of Augustus, according to the terms set by the outdated debate between the so-called 'Harvard' and 'European' schools of interpretation of the *Aeneid*.<sup>40</sup> Rather, I follow a famous chapter by Duncan Kennedy in making our interpretation start from the reception of the *Aeneid* as a text

<sup>37</sup> See Citroni (2000) and Le Doze (2012).

<sup>38</sup> See Thomas (2001) 94–5 and 119–21 on ancient anti-Augustan readings of *Eclogues* 1 and 9.

<sup>39</sup> See Wallace-Hadrill (1982) on the ambivalence between autocratic reality and Republican façade as the essence of the emperor's role.

<sup>40</sup> Among the milestones of the so-called 'Harvard' school, which reads Virgil's *Aeneid* as fundamentally pessimistic and at times anti-Augustan, are Parry (1963), Clausen (1964), Putnam (1965), W. R. Johnson (1976) and Lyne (1987); on the 'European' side, which reads the *Aeneid* as fundamentally optimistic and (pro-) Augustan, are Pöschl (1962), Büchner (1955), Klingner (1967), Hardie (1986). The debate was obviously more nuanced and complicated than I could express in a footnote; see Thomas (2001) on the reception of Virgil's epic in terms of political allegiance.

that can be seen as simultaneously supporting or undermining Augustus in terms of the ideology it proposes.<sup>41</sup> For instance, I am not interested in finding out whether Horace does not mention the conspiracy of Caepio and Murena out of partisanship towards Augustus, or whether he alludes to it in order to leave traces of his subversive attitude to the regime, but prefer to focus on the ways in which Horace's text, by emphatically not providing us with that answer, becomes a locus for conspiracy theories no less than the regime itself.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, I find that the continuous doubts that these texts themselves raise over their pro- or anti-Augustanism is in itself one important feature, if not *the* important feature, of what we refer to as 'Augustan' literature.<sup>43</sup> This does not mean that I refrain from interpreting the tones or even intentions of Virgil's text. Rather, it will soon be clear, especially in [Chapter 4](#), that I am influenced by the Harvard School in reading the *Aeneid* as a text imbued in a deep pessimism over the transience of human life and achievements, and thus also over the eventual outcomes of the new regime. But it seems to me illogical, and possibly even ahistorical, not to find this pessimism no less helpful and suitable for the Augustan ideology than the *Aeneid's* apparent optimism, since the ideology of a regime that presented itself as a paradoxical 'monarchic Republic' was shaped in such a way as to accommodate patent oppositions and contradictions while encompassing the totality of Rome's post-crisis political discourse.<sup>44</sup>

While I cannot believe in the existence of some sort of top-down propaganda, dictated by Augustus or his immediate following to his poetic intelligentsia, this in no way implies that I do not believe in the existence of such a thing as Augustan

<sup>41</sup> Kennedy (1992). I have engaged with this chapter and its reception in Giusti (2016c).

<sup>42</sup> Especially if we compare its omissions with all that is left unsaid in Augustus' own *Res Gestae*, see Cooley (2009) 30–41.

<sup>43</sup> Note also that the poets and the *Princeps* mirror each other in terms of their *recusationes*, or 'poses of denial', to either support/sing about or hold absolute power: see Freudenburg (2014), with special reference to Horace's Epistle to Augustus (*Ep.* 2.1), and Wallace-Hadrill (1982) 36–7 on how the Principate 'was established by an act of denial (*recusatio*), ritually perpetuated from reign to reign'.

<sup>44</sup> I expand this fully in Giusti (2016c), as well as in the Conclusion, see p. 283.

ideology, and that I do not find it pervasive, in different degrees and different manifestations, in all the cultural products of the time. Nor do I fail to see the oppressive aspects of such ideology, even if I imagine it as having developed almost naturally and willingly in a network of reciprocal influences between poets and patrons rather than being dictated from on high. By taking Virgil's *Aeneid*, as well as Horace's *Odes*, as simultaneously products and producers of Augustan ideology, I follow Duncan Kennedy once again in encouraging a shift of perspective from the intention of these authors to the characteristics of a period which has made the languages of consent and dissent appear indistinguishable, at any rate from our distant perspective. Throughout this book, I circumscribe Augustan ideology as a series of images, tropes, values and beliefs used to make sense of a political present whose status was not yet completely codified, and whose future was still wholly uncertain, and which tried to advocate an explicit rupture with the traumatic memory of the late Republican past of the Civil Wars while attempting a direct connection with the history of the middle Republic in the form of a political and cultural renewal, or revolution. This anchoring back to the middle Republic while effectively overturning Rome's entire Republican political system is what made Augustus' revolution, to quote Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, the 'perfect revolution, which in changing everything changes also the perception of what is normal and traditional, and so erases its own revolutionary status'.<sup>45</sup> It is, in other words, the opposite – but uncannily analogous opposite – of *The Leopard*'s famous dictum: 'everything must stay the same, so that everything can change'.<sup>46</sup>

In this context, the re-evocation of Carthage, most formidable enemy of the middle Republic, can be seen at the centre

<sup>45</sup> Wallace-Hadrill (2008) 258; cf. also 36–7. On Augustus' political revolution, Syme (1939) is the classic point of departure. On the cultural revolution, see Habinek-Schiesaro (1997) and Wallace-Hadrill (2008).

<sup>46</sup> I refer to Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa's historical novel *The Leopard* (*Il Gattopardo*, 1958), in which the young Tancredi voices the by now proverbial dictum in order to dissuade his uncle, the Prince of Salina, from opposing the revolution: 'Se vogliamo che tutto rimanga com'è, bisogna che tutto cambi,' 'If we want everything to stay as it is, then everything must change.'

of the interests of both Augustus and the poets in attempting a return to the *tempus actum* in which the Romans were not only engaged in foreign rather than intestine wars, but were also considered to have been at the acme of their power.<sup>47</sup> However, Augustan poets do not appear to talk about the period of the Punic Wars without establishing some sort of relationship with its ‘future in the past’.<sup>48</sup> Just as in Horace’s Ode to Pollio, so too in Virgil’s *Aeneid* and in Livy’s third decade, the history of the Civil Wars continues to surface behind the representation of Carthage and the Carthaginians as a spooky cautionary tale, and the dramatic destruction of Carthage is continuously superimposed on the fall of Republican Rome. In this context, the representation of Carthaginians as the ‘enemy’, the ‘barbarian’, the ‘other’ (in itself a representation that always includes, as we will see, a certain degree of mirroring with the ‘self’) becomes extremely liable to collapse into itself.

After the experience of the Civil Wars, the Enemy in a Sallustian sense – the foreign Enemy, with a capital E – could only forcibly be dragged in chains onto a fictional historical stage. In all of Horace’s Civil War *Epodes* (7, 9 and 16), foreign enemies, and Carthage in particular as Rome’s formidable arch-enemy, are paradoxically evoked as the messianic saviours whose existence may rescue the City from its fratricidal carnage.<sup>49</sup> In Horace’s *Odes*, reference to the Parthians or to the borders of the empire helps whitewash the crude reality of recent history, and keeps the Republic in check, making sure that no further civil blood will be spilt, as long as Rome has formidable enemies abroad.<sup>50</sup> And yet these texts also make these barbarians appear like fictional puppets. In Virgil’s *Georgics*, before the representations of other barbarians on the theatre-temple erected in honour of Augustus’ triple triumph (*G.* 3.26–33), barbarians (Britons) also feature as the characters woven into the crimson curtain that they only appear to

<sup>47</sup> As in *Pol.* 6.51.5, see p. 254.

<sup>48</sup> To borrow from Reeve (1987).

<sup>49</sup> See *Hor. Epod.* 7.5–10, 16.1–10 with Stocks (2016). I have argued how *Epode* 9 fits the pattern established by 7 and 16 in Giusti (2016b).

<sup>50</sup> See Seager (1980).



raise in glorification of Rome's success (*G.* 3.25 *purpurea intexti tollant aulaea Britanni*, 'the interwoven Britons raise the purple curtain').<sup>51</sup> They contribute to, and are at the same time part of, a theatrical spectacle that has little to do with the reality of a triumph celebrating a war that was only technically foreign but actually intestine.<sup>52</sup> If even Britons appear fake in the post-Actian peace, Carthage and the Carthaginians are surely no more than a mirage. While Horace and Virgil write on mid-Republican Carthage, the city is being, or is about to be, rebuilt in a Roman guise.<sup>53</sup> Concurrently, the Carthaginian characters presented in these texts are also refashioned in a Roman guise. As this book will argue, they are at times represented as barbarians, according to a longstanding set of cultural tropes inherited from Greek literature and culture and probably filtered by the culture of the middle Republic, but in Augustan literature they easily metamorphose into doubles, or *figurae*, of the leading characters of the late Republican crisis.

We can test this observation briefly both in the Carthage episode of Virgil's *Aeneid* and in the opening of Livy's third decade on the Hannibalic War. But whereas the allusions to Antony and Cleopatra behind Virgil's Aeneas and Dido are by now more than familiar among Latin scholars,<sup>54</sup> Livy's opening of his account of the Hannibalic War through the memory of one of the most formidable threats to the political stability of late Republican Rome, Sallust's Catiline, calls for more investigation. Livy leads his readers through a city which is and is not Carthage: the election of Hannibal as Hasdrubal's

<sup>51</sup> Servius, believing that Augustus had conquered Britain, says he forced many of the captives to work in the theatre, but Wilkinson (1969) 168, Thomas (1988) 44 and Mynors (1990) 183–4 all agree in reading the scene as if the figures of the Britons woven into the curtain, rising, only *seem* to be raising it.

<sup>52</sup> I provide a reading of the scene, and of the fictional nature of these barbarians, in Giusti (forthcoming).

<sup>53</sup> The *Colonia Iulia Concordia Carthago*, see p. 200 n. 8.

<sup>54</sup> Bibliography on the connection between Dido and Cleopatra is vast: the suggestion was rejected by Pöschl (1962) 189 n. 39 but it is now almost universally recognised, see Bertman (2000), Syed (2005) 184–93, Hardie (2006) and (2014) 55–7. Note the famous intertextual analogy between *A.* 4.644 *pallida morte futura*, 'pale at the prospect of incoming death' (Dido) and the analogous expression at 8.709 *pallentem morte futura* (Cleopatra).

successor strictly follows the practices of Roman elections, with popular favour (Liv. 21.3.1 *fauor ... plebis*) following from the *praerogatiua*<sup>55</sup> of the soldiers (21.3.1 *praerogatiuam militarem*) and the matter being shortly afterwards discussed in the ‘Senate’ (21.3.2 *actaque res etiam in senatu fuerat*).<sup>56</sup> There follows Livy’s choice to convey the anti-Barcid opposition through the character of Hanno, a Carthaginian who not only fulfils the proper role of ‘tragic warner’,<sup>57</sup> but also seems to speak, according to Clauss, like Cicero against Catiline, since the charges of which the Barcids are accused – sexual corruption of the youth (21.3.4), setting fire, albeit metaphorically, to their own city (21.3.6) – and the final possible external allusion to the *optimates* (21.4.1 *optimus quisque*),<sup>58</sup> all find correspondence in the Catilinarian conspiracy.<sup>59</sup> These suggestions are eventually confirmed by Livy’s portrait of Hannibal (21.4.3–9), which displays a well-known similarity to Catiline’s portrait in Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinae* (BC 5).<sup>60</sup> As Clauss and Rossi notice, this is to emphasise the threat that Hannibal poses to Carthage: like Catiline, he is an enemy to his own city.<sup>61</sup> But the allusion also reads as an implicit negation of Livy’s advice to his readers in the preface, where he had specifically warned them not to ‘hurry to reach these modern times, in which the might of a people which has long been all-powerful is working its own undoing’ (Liv. *Praef.* 4 *festinantibus ad haec noua, quibus iam pridem praeualentis populi uires se ipsae conficiunt*). The observation is perhaps better sustained by the fact

<sup>55</sup> A strictly technical term for the first centuria which voted in Roman elections; see Walsh (1973) 125.

<sup>56</sup> By which he would mean not the *gerousia* of 30 but the *synkletos* of 300; see Walsh (1973) 126, commenting on ‘how slight Livy’s information is on Carthaginian politics’.

<sup>57</sup> See Mader (1993) 209–13. Cipriani (1984) 78 connects Hanno’s vivid representation of Hannibal as a spark that will cause a great fire (Liv. 21.3.6 *ne quandoque paruus hic ignis incendium ingens exsuscitet*) with Hecuba’s dream of giving birth to a torch that would destroy her city as a prefiguration for the birth of Paris and his future story. See Levene (2010) 108–11.

<sup>58</sup> *contra* Walsh (1973) 127.

<sup>59</sup> See Clauss (1997b) 174–6.

<sup>60</sup> Walsh (1973) 127, Clauss (1997b) 170–2, Rossi (2004b) 276–8, Levene (2010) 99–104.

<sup>61</sup> Clauss (1997b) 175–81, Rossi (2004b) 276–8.

that Hannibal's portrait is not just mapped onto Catiline, but rather, as Levene rightly emphasises, 'appears to be a mixture of Catiline and Jugurtha' as described by Sallust at *BJ* 6.1 and 7.4–5.<sup>62</sup> By prefiguring both Catiline and Jugurtha, Hannibal's 'true threat comes because of their involvement with the vicious corruption which (Sallust claims) took hold of Rome after the fall of Carthage'.<sup>63</sup> This double Catiline/Jugurtha memento sets off that historical-tragic concatenation of cause-and-effect connections that was depicted in the Ode to Pollio: from a post-Civil Wars perspective, the narrative of the Punic Wars immediately drags us to the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE, tragically evoked by Hanno, and also fuels the memory of that crisis of which Catiline was just a spark – the crisis that brought about the wars whose dead we have seen offered to Jugurtha as expiation of Rome's Punic, African and civil crimes.

The fusion of Catiline and Jugurtha in Livy's Augustan Hannibal is akin to the shadow of Cleopatra *qua* Antony's partner which haunts Virgil's Dido: a reminder of Civil War, in both its purely civil and foreign/civil fashion. In both texts, the Carthaginian Enemy is forced to come onstage and play his role in Augustus' cultural revolution and its attempt to recover the middle Republic: but sooner or later there always comes the feeling that these Carthaginians in the epic and historical fictions are not strictly Carthaginians but rather Romans dressed up as Carthaginians. Like Venus at the beginning of the *Aeneid*, both Livy's Hannibal and Virgil's Dido come on stage 'in boots', shod with the traditional cothurnus,<sup>64</sup> characters from a tragedy and doubles of someone else. They are both mythical and historical, ancient and contemporary, foreigners and Romans, and as the foreign/civil confusion continues in the collective memory of the Latin authors, the already paradoxical *perfidia plus quam Punica* ('a perfidy more than Punic')

<sup>62</sup> Levene (2010) 101.

<sup>63</sup> Levene (2010) 102.

<sup>64</sup> I refer to E. L. Harrison's groundbreaking article (1972–3) on tragedy in *Aeneid* 1 and 4 as signalled by Venus' *cothurnus* (*A.* 1.337), from which I have adapted the title of this sub-chapter.

## Staging the Enemy under Augustus

of Livy's Catilinarian Hannibal (Liv. 21.4.9) will eventually give way to more paradoxical definitions, when post-Augustan epic is finally allowed to write and rewrite those *bella ... plus quam ciuilia*, 'wars ... more than civil' (Lucan 1.1).

## Staging the Enemy under Augustus

From these premises, this book reads Virgil's portrait of Carthage in the *Aeneid* and his epic rewriting of the Punic Wars in the Carthage episode as a tragic-historical revisionist take on this period of mid-Republican history, from the point of view of an author whose work is imbued in the traumatic memory of the Civil Wars. Given the complexity of the issue, the argument is divided into two main sections, which each have a different focus but are both concerned with the degree of inventiveness and truth-twisting displayed in Virgil's presentation of Carthage. While the first section deals with the fictionality inherent in Virgil's portrait of the Carthaginians, the second explores instead the ways in which the history and historiography of the Punic Wars are translated into myth in this fictional epic.

The first half of the book (Chapters 1 and 2) presents Virgil's cultural construction of the Carthaginian enemy as a struggle to emphasise its otherness, which eventually gives way to the emergence of a striking resemblance to the Roman 'self'. The history of this polarised but analogical portrait of the Carthaginians has an old pedigree. In Chapter 1, I attempt an understanding, unavoidably tainted by speculation, of their original features as the arch-enemies of Republican Rome in the literature of the middle Republic, which is necessary to the interpretation that follows, developed in Chapter 2, of how Virgil adapted these features to his Augustan context. The matter is obviously complicated by the scarcity of our sources, since the only fully extant text from the period from which we can reconstruct Carthaginian stereotypes in the middle Republic is the *Poenulus* of Plautus, a text which presents a Carthaginian who appears simultaneously as stereotypically barbarian and surprisingly Roman. Nevertheless, a

survey of the extant sources and their contexts persuades me to put forward the argument that the literature of the middle Republic played a key role in developing a portrait of the Carthaginians as barbarians on the model of the Persians in fifth-century Athenian discourse, and that traces of such a portrait can still be detected in Virgil's *Aeneid*. However, just like Plautus' *Poenulus*, the barbarians presented in the other extant sources can also be seen to act as a mirror for the Romans, demonstrating the instability and difficulty of demarcating Roman identity in the terms adopted by Classical and Hellenistic Greece.

Chapter 2 continues to explore the extent of this fluctuation between barbarians and Romans, 'other' and 'self', in the representation of Carthage and Dido in the *Aeneid*.<sup>65</sup> I argue that, while this instability may have been present in the mid-Republican sources, it changes connotations in Virgil's times, when the analogies between Romans and Carthaginians must rather be connected to the traumatic experience of the Civil Wars caused by the loss of an external enemy. On the one hand, the polarisation of the Carthaginians on the model of the Persian barbarians builds a direct link between the Persian Wars, the Punic Wars and the wars that Augustus will wage against the Parthians, warding off the danger of further civil conflict through the evocation of *metus hostilis*; on the other hand, the analogies between Carthaginians and Romans, coupled with clear allusions to the history of Antony and Cleopatra, seem to indicate that Virgil's preoccupation is with the civil conflict. The use of Carthage in the poem thus appears to suit the ideological needs of foregrounding foreign conflict while whitewashing the reality of the strife against fellow citizens on which the Principate itself was built.

The second half of the book (Chapters 3 and 4) uses the Punic Wars as a case study on the relationship between epic and historiography in the Augustan age, focusing in particular on a dialogue between Virgil and Livy, or rather on the similarities between their parallel rewriting of the myth and

<sup>65</sup> An edited version of this chapter has already been published as Giusti (2016a).

history of the Punic Wars following the specific needs, but also the present anxieties, of the Augustan age. [Chapter 3](#) focuses on these authors' use of *Fama* in their respective Carthage episodes, investigating the parallel emergence, in the *Aeneid* 4 and in Livy Book 21, of a concept similar to our postmodernist notion of 'Metahistory'.<sup>66</sup> I argue that both Virgil and Livy, when dealing with Carthage, show a parallel use of *Fama*-as-rumour which leads their readers towards a blurring of the distinction between history and myth, and consequent recognition of history as ideological discourse. The chapter attempts a clarification, as much as possible, of the shadowy issue of the relationship between these two authors, and argues for a programmatic similarity between the distortion of time in Virgil's Carthage episode and in Livy's account of Hannibal's attack on Saguntum.

Finally, [Chapter 4](#) posits that alongside the most obvious layer of historical deception in Virgil's Carthage episode, namely the substitution of Dido for Cleopatra, there lies another historical allegory, since the history of the Punic Wars seems to disappear in the *Aeneid* once they have been replaced with the fiction of myth. The chapter thus reads the whole of Virgil's Carthage episode as an historical allegory of the wars through specific allusions to the First Punic War in Book 1 and the Hannibalic War in the course of Book 4, up to the imaginary destruction of Carthage which overlaps with Dido's death in the finale of the episode. This allegorical interpretation is sealed by what I argue to be a triumphal reenactment of episodes of the wars encoded in the Sicilian *Ludi* in Book 5. A section of this chapter discusses tragedy once more, but this time addressing the topic of tragic historiography in Livy. It shows that the tragic genre can be read as one of the strongest points of contact between Virgil and Livy in so far as it provides both authors with a model for a cyclical view of history. This, when read together with the importance of *Fama* (Rumour) and the distortion of temporal coordinates in both Virgil's and Livy's rewritings of the Punic Wars, shows both authors engaging in

<sup>66</sup> For the term, see White (1973).

an implicit subversion of objective historiography, defined as a discipline founded on writing and diachronicity.

The clear common thread running through this book is unquestionably tragedy, which as I said earlier I see as the proprietary genre of the Punic Wars, especially in their post-Civil Wars reconstruction. The literature on the Punic Wars, I argue in [Chapter 1](#), possibly finds an origin within the tragic genre on the model of the ‘Invention of the Barbarian’ in fifth-century Athenian tragedy, and this may be reflected in Virgil’s famous shaping of *Aeneid* 4 as a tragedy. Likewise, Livy’s recognised use of tragic modes of historiography in his account of the Hannibalic War probably had a longstanding tradition, but it nonetheless finds in Livy himself an especially remarkable exponent. A different point must be made for Virgil’s and Livy’s parallel use of tragedy in relation to the capture of cities, which I discuss in the last section of [Chapter 4](#), where Polybius’ theory of *anakyklosis* appears to be incompatible with, and yet at the same time inextricably linked to, the new Augustan myth of the eternity of Rome. Within this discussion, Polybius’ entirely un-tragic cyclical view of history is freely connected by Virgil and Livy to the cyclicity of time and history as presented in Greek tragedy, since the notion that every city, including both Carthage and Rome, must ultimately perish also brings into the picture that chain of guilt and retribution that lies at the heart of the cause-and-effect connections between Punic and Civil Wars, in stark contrast with the teleological nature of the Augustan epic.

Virgil’s only way to escape from this traumatic memory of the Civil Wars was to reconstruct the image of the arch-enemy of the Roman Republic and simultaneously build the portrait of a new terrifying foreign enemy against which Rome’s efforts must be directed in continuation of Sallust’s recommendations on *metus hostilis*: the Parthians of Augustus’ times. Hence Virgil’s Carthaginians, whose connection to fifth-century Persians seems to have been already established in the mid-Republican period, strengthen their Persian and orientalist traits in order to embody the Persians of Augustus’ time: the Parthians against whom Horace repeatedly begs Augustus to

take action.<sup>67</sup> And yet, notwithstanding the strongly orientalist presentation of Queen Dido and her city, the memory of the foreign/Civil War against Cleopatra and Antony surfaces again and again in the course of the epic – in the end, not even ‘all the perfumes of Arabia’ can sweeten the hands of those who have recently shed brotherly blood on the ‘treacherous ashes’ of the Roman Republic.

<sup>67</sup> See Seager (1980).



CHAPTER I

CARTHAGINIAN CONSTRUCTIONS, SINCE  
THE MIDDLE REPUBLIC

Crucial though Greece is, it cannot speak for everything.

Matthew Leigh<sup>1</sup>

**1.1 Barbarians at the Gates**

If the opening poem of Horace's second book of *Odes* had not been clear enough about the poet's intention to withdraw from recent and contemporary history, the second half of the book reiterates the point by addressing Horace's patron. While 'treatment' (*tractatio*) of the wars fought by the previous Caesar was the dangerous task of the historiographer Pollio,<sup>2</sup> praise of the contemporary achievements of *this* Caesar, and specifically of the triple triumph of 29 BCE, must be performed by the 'speaking prose books' of Maecenas:<sup>3</sup>

Nolis longa ferae bella Numantiae  
nec durum Hannibalem nec Siculum mare  
Poeni purpureum sanguine mollibus  
aptari citharae modis

nec saeuos Lapithas et nimium mero  
Hylaeum domitosque Herculeam manu  
Telluris iuuenes, unde periculum  
fulgens contremuit domus

<sup>1</sup> Leigh (2004) 55.

<sup>2</sup> See [Introduction](#).

<sup>3</sup> Servius' comment that Maecenas 'described the achievements of Augustus' seems to originate from here (Serv. *ad G.* 2.41); the elder Pliny's information that Maecenas was a source for the battle of Philippi (*Nat.* 4.148) is too vague to be taken as evidence for Maecenas' historiographical work. See Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 193.

## Barbarians at the Gates

Saturni ueteris: tuque pedestribus  
dices historiis proelia Caesaris,  
Maecenas, melius ductaque per uias  
regum colla minacium.

(Hor. *Carm.* 2.12.1–12)

You would not wish the long wars against ferocious Numantia, or rugged Hannibal, or the Sicilian sea, turned purple by Punic blood, to be set on the soft melodies of the lyre; nor the savage Lapiths, and Hylaeus, mad with wine, and the youth of the Earth, vanquished by Hercules' hand, when their threat caused Saturn's bright abode to tremble; you will rather tell of Caesar's battles in the pedestrian style of historical prose, Maecenas, and of the necks of menacing kings being dragged through the streets.

The *recusatio* of historical and mythological themes that opens *Ode* 2.12 with a 'generalising second person'<sup>4</sup> (*nolis*, 'one would not wish to') arguably applies to Horace as well as to Maecenas. The poem, composed some time between 25 and 23 BCE,<sup>5</sup> provides us with a sweeping overview of what would be considered stock epic material at the beginning of the Principate. The topics here proposed and rejected by lyric Horace all contribute to establishing both a direct continuity with the history and literature of the middle Republic, and a set of multiple mythological correspondences that cut across the Republican period by stretching from fifth-century Athens up to the age of Caesar Augustus.

The poem's first stanza drags us back in time to the middle Republic's chronological extremes. Mention of the 'long wars against ferocious Numantia' (1 *longa ferae bella Numantiae*) takes us to the various wars fought in Spain in the second century BCE and specifically to 133, the year of Scipio Aemilianus' destruction of Numantia, and of the murder of Tiberius Gracchus, considered by the Romans themselves the starting

<sup>4</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 183.

<sup>5</sup> See Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 184: the poem seems to allude to Augustus' campaigns against the Cantabrians and to Aelius Gallus' Arabian expedition (both in 26–25 BCE); on 23 BCE as date of 'publication' of *Odes* 1–3 see Nisbet-Hubbard (1970) xxxv–xxxvii.

point of civil discord, and the ‘beginning of the end’ for the Republic.<sup>6</sup> Turning backwards through the Second Punic War of ‘rugged Hannibal’ (2 *durum Hannibalem*), we eventually land – lingering on the enjambment – on the picture of the ‘Sicilian sea, turned purple by Punic blood’ (2–3 *Siculum mare | Poeno purpureum sanguine*).<sup>7</sup> We are now at the very beginning of the middle Republic: back in 241 BCE, the year of the battle of the Aegates Islands, which marked both the end of the First Punic War and the conquest of Sicily – a recognisable watershed moment, as we are soon going to see, for the history of Rome and its ‘literature’.<sup>8</sup> Within this condensed summary of Rome’s most glorious era, Horace’s message is that lyric poetry is no good fit if you want to play at becoming Hostius,<sup>9</sup> Ennius, or Naevius.<sup>10</sup> But he also tells us that treatment of these topics need not be a mere rewriting or adaptation of Republican historical epos: rather, as Nisbet and Hubbard emphasise, they are all pertinent and relevant to contemporary history: Scipio Aemilianus’ success in the Numantine War in 133 BCE is mapped onto Augustus’ campaigns against the Cantabrians in 26–25 BCE,<sup>11</sup> while Gaius Duilius’ victory against the Carthaginians at Mylae in 260 BCE easily becomes a prefiguration of the naval victory of Agrippa against Sextus Pompey at Mylae’s very site in 36 BCE.<sup>12</sup> With perhaps more difficulty, we are also encouraged to remember a superimposition of Hannibal and Antony already established in Horace’s *Epode* 9,<sup>13</sup> and thus think of

<sup>6</sup> See Flower (2010) 61–2 with n. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Note the etymological pun in *Poeno purpureum*, with *Poenus* being the Latin for Greek φοινῖξ, meaning both ‘purple’ and ‘Phoenician’.

<sup>8</sup> See Feeney (2016) especially 92–3; Biggs (2016, unpublished) specifically on this poem.

<sup>9</sup> Author of a lost *bellum Histricum* whose chronology is discussed: see Vinchesi (1984) for 129 BCE; Bandelli (2004) 102 n. 35 for 178–177 BCE. At any rate Horace alludes to the *recusatio* of Lucilius (620–1 M), as in *Satire* 2.1: see Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 184; Muecke (1995) 216–17.

<sup>10</sup> See Carlson (1978) on how the historical and mythological imagery is turned to the needs of lyric poetry in the following stanzas by means of a number of careful juxtapositions.

<sup>11</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 184: ‘The area was little more than 100 miles from Numantia, a negligible distance to mapless poets in Rome.’

<sup>12</sup> On the model of Duilius in Augustan propaganda, see Biggs (2014) 211–62.

<sup>13</sup> Hor. *Epod.* 9.27–32, see Cairns (1983) 85–93 and Giusti (2016b) 147–9.

the Hannibalic War as a prefiguration of Octavian's own north African War, against Egypt and Cleopatra.<sup>14</sup>

These analogies between mid-Republican and Augustan history are further juxtaposed with Greek mythology in the following stanza, where the *recusatio* encompasses mythological themes worthy of an epic poem: the battle of Lapiths and Centaurs (5–6), and Hercules' killing of the Giants who were threatening Olympus (6–8).<sup>15</sup> Even if readers need not necessarily see a specific allusion to drunken Antony in the Centaur 'Hylaeus, mad with wine' (5–6 *nimium mero | Hylaeum*),<sup>16</sup> the political significance of these themes in the Augustan age cannot be doubted: as we shall soon see, both Hercules' taming of monsters and the defeats of Giants and Centaurs in Gigantomachies and Centauromachies are well-attested allegories for Augustus' military and political triumphs in literary and artistic representations. This imagery, as is well known, has a long history of being symbolic of the victory of civilisation over barbarism, rationality over chaos, at least since fifth-century Athens used it to represent the fight of the Hellenes against the Persian barbarians.<sup>17</sup>

We shall soon return to the use of fifth-century Athenian representations of the fight against barbarians in the age of Augustus, since the question of whether the propagandistic use of this (philo-)Hellenic imagery in Rome has to be considered an Augustan innovation or was instead already present in the ideology of the middle Republic will be at the very centre of this chapter. For now, what is interesting to notice in Horace's *Ode* 2.12 is the juxtaposition of this imagery with the historical events of mid-Republican history and the election of both as prefigurations of those 'battles of Caesar' (10 *proelia*

<sup>14</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 185.

<sup>15</sup> There also seems to be an allusion to Hercules' killing of Hylaeus, one of the Centaurs (as in Verg. *A.* 8.294, see Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 188–9), which would parallel the three topics of the first stanza.

<sup>16</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 188.

<sup>17</sup> The classic study is Vian (1952). Giants and Centaurs plausibly exemplified ferocity and irrationality already in Homer and Hesiod, but it seems to be only in the Athenian propaganda following the Persian Wars that they systematically become a symbol of barbarism and otherness, see E. Hall (1989) 51–62.

*Caesaris*) that should be narrated by Maecenas in ‘the pedestrian style of historical prose’ (9–10 *pedestribus ... historiis*). By the time we reach the third stanza, ‘the menacing kings’ (12 *regum ... minacium*) dragged in triumph by Augustus in 29 BCE have already been mapped onto both Roman mid-Republican history and fifth-century Athenian mythology. In an analogical mode reminiscent of Pindar’s first Pythian Ode, which assimilates Carthaginians, Etruscans and Persians to the chaos-threatening Typhoeus,<sup>18</sup> here Caesar’s enemies (the Cantabrians, Sextus Pompey, Antony and Cleopatra) become the contemporary equivalent of both Spaniards and Carthaginians in the middle Republic, and of the Persians in fifth-century Athens. Just like the Carthaginians at the time of the Punic Wars, they are now Augustan Rome’s Centaurs and Giants. As a result, the ‘battles of Caesar’ reproduce both the military conquests of mid-Republican history and the Hellenic fight against the barbarian invader.

Connections between the Persian Wars, the Punic Wars, and the ‘battles of Caesar’ are in no way a peculiar feature of Horace’s *Ode* 2.12. On the contrary, they can be witnessed at various stages in Augustan literature and art, not least in Virgil’s *Aeneid*, where the myth of Aeneas and Dido, as we shall see more clearly in the course of this book, becomes the hub of multiple correspondences with the Punic Wars, the Persian Wars and Augustus’ conflict against Antony and Cleopatra. Just as the evocation of a direct link between the middle Republic and the Augustan age would have helped in whitewashing the memory of the internal crisis of the late Republic, such an emphasis on past and present foreign wars in the years following the battle of Actium also served the impending necessity of occluding the civil nature of Octavian’s alleged war against Egypt. Moreover, it would ward off the danger of further civil war by bolstering a feeling of national cohesion through evocation of *metus hostilis* – no matter whether the foreign

<sup>18</sup> Pind. *Pyth.* 1.16, on which see p. 58. Horace’s use of Pindar also highlights Augustus’ role as potential successor of the Sicilian tyrants, on which see Gowers (2010) 81.

enemies were Egyptians, Spaniards, Britons or Parthians: anyone would do but fellow Romans. When looking at the matter under this lens, it is possible to imagine that the picture of Carthaginians as barbarians – whether Persian barbarians or allegorised as Centaurs and Giants – was introduced in the Augustan age, at the same time of both this renewed urgency to evoke foreign war and the enthusiastic adoption of fifth-century Athenian discourse. Indeed, both Antony Spawforth and Philip Hardie suspect that, notwithstanding the fact that the Persian Wars had been used as a rhetorical topos at least since Isocrates and that the Persians were the stock model for barbarians throughout the Hellenistic age,<sup>19</sup> ‘it was at the time of the Civil Wars at the end of the Roman Republic and the early years of Augustus that the analogy of the Greek defeat of the Persians became embedded in the Roman consciousness as a defining element of national identity’.<sup>20</sup> Spawforth’s and Hardie’s conclusions depend on the fact that their respective studies focus on the Augustan use of fifth-century Athenian Persian imagery as symbolic either of the Romans’ fight against the Parthians (who only started to be perceived as a threat at Rome in the first century BCE,<sup>21</sup> and mostly after the defeat at Carrhae in 53 BCE), or of the Civil War against Cleopatra and Antony (i.e. the ‘Egyptians’), in a propagandistic effort to project ‘enmity between Roman and Roman ... on to a myth of enmity between Roman and oriental foreigner’.<sup>22</sup>

Without denying the primacy of the Augustan age in terms of a widespread adoption of the ideology of the Greek fight against the Persian barbarians, the present chapter suggests that the alignment of the Carthaginians with fifth-century Athenian barbarians may not be an Augustan innovation.

<sup>19</sup> See Strobel (1994), Barbantani (2001) 147–59, Stewart (2004) 200–I.

<sup>20</sup> Hardie (2007a) 136. Spawforth (1994) 240–2 speaks of Augustan ‘innovations’, although he allows in passing the precedent of the Second Macedonian War for the propagandistic use of the Persian Wars already in the middle Republic (on which see below, pp. 53–6).

<sup>21</sup> Their first equation with the Persians dates to 57 BCE (Cic. *Dom.* 60), but it becomes standard in the Augustan age: see Schneider (1998) 110–13, Hardie (2007a) 127 and 140 n. 45.

<sup>22</sup> Hardie (2007a) 136.

Instead, it is a safer bet to imagine that this connection between Carthaginians and Greek barbarians was already operative at the time of the conflict against Carthage, both because this period coincided with Rome's philo-Hellenic adoption of fifth-century culture in artistic, dramatic and poetic production,<sup>23</sup> and more cogently because the superimposition of Carthaginians and Persians was already operative in the Greek world, and especially in Sicily, whence it was undoubtedly available for Latin authors to pick up – as may well be the case with Naevius, a veteran of the First Punic War, who took part in the Sicilian expedition that opened the conflict.<sup>24</sup>

Therefore, while I agree with the view that there is an essential continuity with Greek literature in the birth of a literature in the Latin language,<sup>25</sup> I would also posit that Carthage and the Punic Wars have long been a missing *tertium quid* in this debate: a strong case can be made for reading the birth of Roman literature, and especially Roman drama, in relation to the artificial formation of a collective enemy, or national 'other', much as Edith Hall famously argued that the invention of the Persian barbarian at Athens basically coincided with the invention of Hellene itself.<sup>26</sup> As we shall see in the course of this book, Hall's model is nowhere near so simple when it comes to analysing representations of 'others' who

<sup>23</sup> Feeney (2016) 14 speaks of 'a decisive shift in the years immediately after the first war against Carthage ... as the Romans began the process of establishing a literature and a literary tradition in their own language on Greek models'.

<sup>24</sup> See Gell. 17.21.45 on Naevius as a First Punic War veteran; Marmorale (1950) 26–39 on Naevius in Agrigentum. On Sicily's role in the development of Roman drama see Dearden (2004).

<sup>25</sup> See especially Feeney (1998) and (2016). For the rejection of a 'Hellenocentric approach', which 'perpetuates a Romantic view of the superiority of Greek culture over Roman', see Habinek (1998) 34–68, in turn accused of the same approach by Feeney (2005) 234 for accepting Zorzetti's hypothesis (1991) of a sympotic culture made of oral performances for the beginnings of Latin literature. On the debate see also Gildenhard (2010) 156 with bibliography.

<sup>26</sup> E. Hall (1989) ix admits that her book 'might ... almost as well have been *Inventing the Hellene as Inventing the Barbarian*'. For an overview of the difficulties in scholarship for interpreting Panhellenism as Greek 'nationality' see Walbank (1951). I am not the first to find an analogy between the birth of Roman theatre in conjunction to the First Punic War and the relationship between fifth-century Athenian theatre and the Persian Wars: see Dangel (2001), with reference to Reggiani (1987) 33–5.

also inevitably function as a mirror for the ‘self’,<sup>27</sup> but it has the merit of focusing attention on the cause-and-effect connections, recurrent in the history of civilisations, between ‘fear of the enemy’, collective action and the building of national identities.<sup>28</sup> As emphasised in particular by Denis Feeney’s recent monograph,<sup>29</sup> the period of the first two Punic Wars (264–201 BCE) coincided with the birth and growing popularity of Roman adaptations of Athenian tragedies and comedies, with Rome’s efforts – problematic as they are – to acquire a common mythical origin,<sup>30</sup> and with the birth of Latin epic and historiography, namely the birth of a ‘national’ literature in the Roman world. Before Feeney, two fundamental contributions had already highlighted the role of the Punic Wars in fostering the origins of Latin literature. Jarrett Welsh argues that a pre-Varronian view, championed by Accius and Porcius Licinus, ‘made Roman literature a product of war, and gave to it a central and prominent position in the bellicose society of the middle Republic’,<sup>31</sup> while Matthew Leigh posits that the first two epic poems of Latin literature, Livius Andronicus’ *Odisia* and Naevius’ *Bellum Punicum*, both deal, in terms of chronology and contents, with the transformation of Rome into a naval military power, an observation which leads him to contend that ‘to a significant degree, the maritime moment and the epic moment are in fact one’.<sup>32</sup> Leigh’s definition of this ‘maritime’ and ‘epic’ moment has so far proved relatively

<sup>27</sup> Among Hall’s critics, Miller (1997) demonstrates the Athenians’ appropriation of, and fascination with, Persian culture; Griffith (2007) emphasises the similarities between Persians and Greeks and the sympathetic aspects of Aeschylus’ *Persae*; and Mitchell (2007) unhooks the birth of Panhellenism from the Persian Wars, without dismissing their importance for its development. See also Mitchell (2007) 22–3 for the application of the barbarian stereotype to Greeks. On the representation of the ‘other’ as a mirror in Herodotus, see the seminal study of Hartog (1988). On the Persians as Greece’s ‘other’ see Gruen (2011) 10–52 with bibliography.

<sup>28</sup> On which see especially Evrigenis (2008).

<sup>29</sup> Feeney (2016).

<sup>30</sup> The belief in the Trojan descent of the Romans in the middle Republic has been challenged by Erskine (2001), who does not allow collective significance to the Aeneas myth until the rise of the Julii, but see *contra* C. B. Rose (2003).

<sup>31</sup> Welsh (2011) 32.

<sup>32</sup> Leigh (2010) 265.



influential among scholars of early Latin literature.<sup>33</sup> While the formulation does not take into consideration the construction of a national enemy, nor the war itself as an important factor in at least accelerating cultural and literary processes, it nonetheless draws very close to what I propose here, once it is recognised that the ‘maritime moment’ of the First Punic War was in fact the first crucial military moment in the international phase of the developing community of Rome.

It is obvious that any model of the kind proposed in this book must necessarily be an artificial over-simplification. In this specific case, the hypothesis that Latin literature developed in the wake of the First and Second Punic Wars must be reconciled with the traditional plot that has it stem from close encounters with Greek culture. Indeed, the cultural burden left by Greece, and its influence according to this scheme, makes it very hard to reconstruct the Roman conception of ‘self’ and ‘other’ on a set of strict and schematic polarisations applied to its military arch-enemy, since the Romans would build their self-image first and foremost in relation to Greece. In the course of this and the [next chapter](#), the role of Greece in relation to the shaping of the Carthaginian enemy is dealt with according to two basic perspectives. First, I argue that the construction of Carthaginian stereotypes and imagery in the middle Republic borrowed from the fifth-century Athenian model of the Persian barbarians. Secondly, however, I necessarily deconstruct the strict polarisations which I risk setting up all too firmly, since from a Greek cultural perspective the Romans featured simultaneously as barbarians,<sup>34</sup> a label which, as Rome’s eventual adoption of a Phrygian identity testifies, the Romans accepted not without a sense of superiority and pride in relation to Greece, especially as regards military matters.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>33</sup> See Biggs (2014) 25 and *passim*, Feeney (2016) 63. Goldschmidt (2013) 109–15 independently reaches similar conclusions.

<sup>34</sup> See Plautus’ adoption of a Greek point of view in his representation of the Romans as barbarians, with Gowers (1993) 50–60.

<sup>35</sup> See Gruen (1992) 31, Dench (1995) 71–2, Feeney (1998) 64–70 and (2005) 238, E. Weber (2000) 137–8. Whitmarsh (2001) 11–12 highlights the paradox of Rome’s superiority over Greece as expressed within Greek cultural standards, a paradox that we will often encounter in the course of this chapter.

If, when exploring the Roman portrait of Carthaginians as barbarians, Greek culture and identity work in terms of analogy and continuity with the Roman ‘self’, this further perspective allows us instead to consider Greece a sort of ‘cultural other’ for Rome, alongside the ‘military other’ embodied by Carthage. From this point of view, Greek culture works in terms of polarity and difference from Rome, which is therefore pushed towards an analogy with the similarly barbarian Carthage.<sup>36</sup>

In what follows, we will first of all see how Horace’s *Ode* 2.12 is only part of a larger picture in which a connection is established between Persians, Carthaginians and the foreign enemies of the Augustan Principate. As a second move, we will consider whether such assimilation was already operative in the artistic and literary production of the middle Republic, and whether it served as a means of collective cohesion at Rome in continuity with Greek culture during the First and Second Punic Wars. It is at this point that we may find one more aspect of Edith Hall’s model applicable to mid-Republican Rome. According to Hall, since theatre was the place that fuelled a feeling of cohesion among the community gathered in opposition to the barbarians presented on stage, drama can be recognised as the privileged locus for the so-called ‘invention of the barbarian’. With this in mind, it is interesting to note that those Greek plays that dealt with barbarian themes appear to have been especially popular among the early Latin tragedians during the years of the conflict against Carthage. It may be that,

<sup>36</sup> For the relationship between Rome and Carthage, I use the terms ‘polarity’ and ‘analogy’, echoing G. E. R. Lloyd (1966), because I find that they best clarify the connection between the Schmittian concept of the necessity of the enemy and the general notion of the interconnection and interdependence of opposites. The concept, however, is akin to that of ‘mimesis and alterity’, coined by anthropologist Michael Taussig and adopted by Denis Feeney for explaining the relationship between Rome and Greece. See Feeney (1998) 68 and (2016) 133: ‘The competing cultures ... oscillate between concentrating on otherness, by focusing on what is different about their rivals, and concentrating on similarity, by the imitative process which best enables them to define and master what makes up that otherness.’ On the mirroring between Carthage and Rome see especially Feeney (2007) 52–7. On the symmetry between Greeks and Carthaginians and the orchestrated synchronism of the destruction of Corinth and Carthage in 146 BCE see especially Purcell (1995).

just as previously at Athens, at Rome too these plays served to hold the community tight around a sense of collective cohesion in cultural continuity with Greek culture. In other words, the barbarian enemies staged at Rome especially during the Second Punic War may have played a key role in shaping and developing the anti-barbarian and anti-Carthaginian ideology that I posit must have existed already in the third and early second centuries, and that became relatively standard in the Augustan era.

Unfortunately, the loss of the relevant literature makes this reconstruction speculative and the argument runs the risk of circularity. The presence of a connection between Carthaginians and Persian barbarians must partly be proved retrospectively from Augustan literature, but to do so implies that Augustan literature must have had a conservative nature, which in turn cannot find definite confirmation in the absence of mid-Republican literature. However, it seems to me that the complex antiquarianism surrounding Virgil's *Aeneid* and the abundance of *loci paralleli* from mid-Republican texts listed in the ancient commentaries provide a safe base for positing the relative conservatism of Virgil's imagery. If this is the case, the extensive use of Republican tragedy present in Virgil's Carthage episode (discussed in [Chapter 2](#)) makes it likely that connections between Carthaginians and barbarians in the *Aeneid* originate in mid-Republican literature, both in epic and in dramatic texts, since the first dramas were written by the same poets who wrote historical epos on the First and Second Punic Wars: Naevius and Ennius. This does not mean that Naevius' *Lycurgus* or Ennius' *Medea* would have made explicit allusion to Carthaginians when they stage mythological barbarians, nor do I argue that the audience would have consciously and necessarily thought about Carthage when watching those plays. Rather, I propose that regardless of whether the association between Greek barbarians and Roman Carthaginians was present in Naevius' and Ennius' epics, the barbarians staged in their plays would have in any case represented Rome's conceptual 'other' or, to use a formulation by Froma Zeitlin, the 'shadow self' of the idealised

community that Rome wished to be at the time.<sup>37</sup> And just as Rome's 'self' partly superimposed itself on Hellenic identity in those tragedies and comedies adapted from their Greek models, Rome's 'shadow self' also ended up superimposing itself on the 'shadow self' of Athenian drama. In other words, by aligning themselves with a culturally Hellenic perspective, the Romans would recognise the Greek concept of barbarians as the archetype of barbarians, with the establishment of a sort of negative association between third-century Rome and fifth-century Athens.<sup>38</sup> It is possible that, since these dramas were performed at the same time as Rome's conflict against Carthage, a subtle and possibly unconscious association was made between these fictional barbarians on stage and the real enemy at the gates, together with a feeling of anti-barbarian cohesion among Rome's theatrical community. However, while the representation of the 'shadow self' inevitably functions as an oppositional mirror for the self in any community (indeed even the Persians in Greek representations have been found to bear uncanny similarities to the Greeks),<sup>39</sup> the case of Rome is particularly interesting insofar as the Romans represent their barbarian 'other' by borrowing the discourse of another culture according to which the Romans themselves were considered barbarians. By recognising that in mid-Republican Rome alterity and identity are the ever-shifting and ill-defined conceptual products of interactions and compromises between these two apparently opposing discourses, we can gain a better understanding of the paradoxes surrounding the only extant portrait of a Carthaginian from the early Roman stage, the *Poenulus* of Plautus.

This is, in short, the bigger mosaic of which the allegories of Horace's *Ode* 2.12 are a recognisable part. However, before

<sup>37</sup> Zeitlin (1986) 117: 'Thebes is ... the obverse side of Athens, the shadow self ... of the idealized city on whose other terrain the tragic action may be pushed to its furthest limits of contradiction and impasse.'

<sup>38</sup> As Schneider (1998) 95 emphasises, with reference to Juv. 10.138 *Romanus Graiusque et barbarus* ('Roman, Greek and barbarian'), barbarians were all those neither Roman nor Greek. Cf. Festus 32 L *barbari dicebantur antiquitus omnes gentes, exceptis Graecis* ('in the old days all people except Greeks were called barbarians').

<sup>39</sup> See Chapter 2.4.1, p. 128.

we turn to look at it, it is worth clarifying what is meant by allegory throughout this book. As we have seen, Horace establishes a series of correlations, or analogies, between the ideological mythology of fifth-century Athens, historical events of the middle Republic and the ‘battles of Caesar’. In addition to this, Nisbet and Hubbard find that the events mentioned in the first stanza all include allusions to, or evocations of, particular events from contemporary Augustan history. As they feel the need to specify when proposing the allusion to Cleopatra behind Horace’s Hannibal, there is a neat difference in these poetic texts between ‘systematic allegory’ and what the ancients called *hyponoia*, ‘undersense’ or ‘deeper meaning’.<sup>40</sup> That is to say that the relationship between Hannibal and Cleopatra in *Ode* 2.12, even if accepted, must not be thought of as some kind of straightforward equation, and the same will hold true for all the ‘allegories’, or evocations, proposed in this book, so that Dido can simultaneously evoke Cleopatra, Hannibal or Atossa, with no single identification working as a privileged key for interpreting the text. While it is not the purpose of this book to unravel the complex and stratified concept of allegory, it is useful to clarify from the start that the allegories hereby proposed are not meant to stand for stable bidirectional processes, but rather open up the polysemic imagery of texts in kaleidoscopic ways, which are continuously subject to changes according to shifts in perspective. To borrow a formulation by Fredric Jameson,

The allegorical spirit is profoundly discontinuous, a matter of breaks and heterogeneities, of the multiple polysemia of the dream rather than the homogeneous representation of the symbol. Our traditional concept of allegories ... is that of an elaborate set of figures and personifications to be read against some one-to-one table of equivalences: this is, so to speak, a one-dimensional view of this signifying process, which might only be set in motion and complexified were we willing to entertain the more alarming notion that such equivalences are themselves in constant change and transformation at each perpetual present of the text.

Jameson (1986) 73

<sup>40</sup> Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 185; *hyponoia* and *allegoria* are distinguished by Plutarch, *Moralia* 19E–F.

While this caveat must be kept in mind throughout our survey, especially when encountering the disturbing possibility that barbarians are simultaneously allegorical of *both* Carthaginians *and* Romans, it also needs stressing that in the Augustan age analogies between events from the middle Republic and contemporary events can appear at times as a more distinct one-to-one process. This is because of the ideological weight that such analogies carried for a regime that aspired to be recognised as the natural continuation of the Republic. Especially in the early stages, there is a marked insistence on inscribing Augustus back into the history of Rome while at the same time turning him into the unavoidable point of arrival since the city's foundation.<sup>41</sup> It is within this ideological programme that we can call the victories of mid-Republican Rome 'historical allegories' or 'typological prefigurations' of the 'battles of Caesar'. And this is where the victories over Carthage, types of Augustus' victories against his own barbarians, play a key role in the establishment of both the Roman and the Augustan empires.

### 1.2 Augustan Barbarians

Horace's *Ode* 2.12, as I have said, does not appear in a vacuum. The whole poem is plausibly modelled on the opening elegy of Propertius' second book, which includes a similar *recusatio* equally addressed to Maecenas (Prop. 2.1.17–46).<sup>42</sup> Among the poetic themes that the elegiac poet would not attempt, were he given the ability to write epic (17–18), Propertius lists Titanomachy and Gigantomachy (19–20),<sup>43</sup> 'Thebaid' and

<sup>41</sup> Gowing (2005) 20–1 speaks of 'a new ideology, one that has co-opted the moral value of traditional Republican *exempla* in order to affirm the supremacy of a single authority ... historical allusion *apart* from the emperor has become increasingly difficult to achieve'.

<sup>42</sup> For the reasons why Propertius should be given priority see Nisbet-Hubbard (1978) 182–3; Fedeli (2005) 70 states the opposite with no discussion. See Fedeli (2005) 40 for various scholarly attempts to read more than one elegy in 2.1, which do not concern us since lines 17–46 are clearly part of the same poem.

<sup>43</sup> On the confusion between the two, see Fedeli (2005) 60.

'Iliad' (21), Xerxes' hubristic transgression of nature (22),<sup>44</sup> the foundation of Rome (23), the Punic Wars (23) and Marius' campaigns against the Cimbri (24). All these exploits pale in comparison with Caesar's battles (25–6):<sup>45</sup>

non ego Titanas canerem, non Ossan Olympo  
impositam, ut caeli Pelion esset iter,  
nec ueteres Thebas nec Pergama, nomen Homeri,  
Xerxis et imperio bina coisse uada,  
regnaue prima Remi aut animos Carthaginis altae  
Cimbrorumque minas et bene facta Mari:  
bellaque resque tui memorarem Caesaris et tu  
Caesare sub magno cura secunda fores.

(Prop. 2.1.19–26)

I should not sing of Titans, or Ossa piled on Olympus, so that Pelion might become the path to heaven; or of ancient Thebes, or Pergamum, Homer's glory, and the union of two seas at Xerxes' command, or the first rule of Remus, or the pride of lofty Carthage, the Cimbrian menace and the splendid feats of Marius; I should tell of the wars and deeds of your Caesar, and you, after mighty Caesar, would be my second theme.

As we shall see more closely below, this *recusatio* of epic themes is followed by what reads like a brief sample of Propertius' inability to praise Caesar's battles without focusing on the horror of Civil War (27–34).<sup>46</sup> The sample ends on the triple triumph of 29 BCE with the picture of a subdued Nile dragged in triumph as captive (31–2) alongside the beaks of Antony's ships, in a couplet especially reminiscent of Horace's *Ode* 2.12 (33–4 *aut regum auratis circumdata colla catenis*, | *Actiaque in Sacra currere rostra Via*, 'or the necks of kings encircled with golden chains, and the Actian prows speeding along the Sacred way', cf. Hor. *Carm.* 2.12.11–12 *ductaque per uias* | *regum colla minacium*, 'and the necks of

<sup>44</sup> The reference is to Xerxes' digging of a canal across Mount Athos to let the Persian fleet pass through in 484 BCE (according to Herodotus 7.24, a purely hubristic act, since they could have easily sailed across the isthmus), see Fedeli (2005) 62.

<sup>45</sup> Propertius' text is from Fedeli (1984) unless specified. Translations are adapted from G. P. Goold's Loeb.

<sup>46</sup> See especially Gurval (1995) 167–79 and below, pp. 45–7.

menacing kings being dragged through the streets'). The climax of Caesar's enterprise eventually takes Propertius to a further Callimachean rejection of these themes, which are again presented in the form of a Gigantomachy (39–40 *sed neque Phlegraeos Iouis Enceladique tumultus | intonet angusto pectore Callimachus*, 'but neither would Callimachus thunder forth from his slender breast the battle waged on Phlegra's plain between Jove and Enceladus'). The repeated appearance of the Gigantomachy, in relation to Callimachus' rejection of it, suggests that fifth-century Athenian imagery of barbarians, filtered through its Hellenistic reception, was the privileged imagery for talking about Caesar's battles in the Augustan age. Just as in Horace's *Ode* 2.12, we witness a stratification of symbols that allows the poets to put Augustus' achievements at the same level of the 'mythological' victories of Greece over Persia and mid-Republican Rome over Carthage. Propertius further emphasises this Greek model by allowing a whole pentameter for Xerxes' transgressive actions (22), a clear echo of the hubris of Titans and Giants, preceded and followed by the picture of Rome and Carthage facing one another as in a mirror. We find the two cities first in the form of their eastern doubles, Troy and (Phoenician) Thebes (21),<sup>47</sup> and then explicitly, in line 23, where the position of *aut* following the caesura seems to encapsulate the historical conflict between the two powers.<sup>48</sup>

As we shall see at the end of this section, the model of Xerxes in the Augustan age is far from an unproblematic tag of barbarism which may be attached to any enemy of Rome in order to bolster a feeling of opposition. It helps instead to stimulate more nuanced reflections on tyranny and power, so that it may paradoxically bring Rome and Carthage together as much as it polarises their enmity. And yet what interests us so far is a simplified version of this model, where the Persians and their mythological correspondents (Titans/Giants, Centaurs, Amazons) are established, in the early Principate, as the

<sup>47</sup> On Thebes as a double for Carthage see [Chapter 2.4.3](#), pp. 140–7.

<sup>48</sup> Fedeli (2005) 62.



archetype for the barbarian enemies of both Republican and Augustan Rome. Even though barbarian imagery was better suited to represent contemporary conflicts (especially Actium and the Parthian campaign), we have further evidence, in addition to Horace's *Ode* 2.12 and Propertius 2.1, for the assimilation of Carthaginians and (Persian) barbarians in the age of Augustus. As we shall see in [Chapter 2](#), the Gigantomachic moments of Virgil's *Aeneid*, famously brought to light by Philip Hardie together with their classical Greek and Hellenistic pedigree,<sup>49</sup> allude not only to the battles of Caesar as depicted on Aeneas' shield, but also to the Punic Wars, allegorised behind the myth of Aeneas and Dido in the first and fourth books of the epic.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, among the frequent Gigantomachies of Augustan literature,<sup>51</sup> that of Horace's *Ode* 3.4 is followed, in *Ode* 3.5, by an implicit comparison between the recent conflict against Parthia and the First Punic War, activated when Horace juxtaposes the debate over the ransoming of the soldiers defeated at Carrhae in 53 BCE with the heroic sacrifice of Marcus Atilius Regulus,<sup>52</sup> thus creating the effect of an inimical coalition of Giants, Parthians and Carthaginians in opposition to Rome.

The assimilation between Carthaginians and (Persian) barbarians also surfaces in historiographical texts. Indeed, it is worth lingering briefly on a possible parallel between Hannibal and Xerxes in Livy's third decade, where Hannibal's crossing of the Alps is represented as an act of violence towards nature and, in the words of Andrew Feldherr, 'a Xerxes-like transgression of natural boundaries'.<sup>53</sup> Notably, just before the start of the actual march over the Alps, Livy reminds us that Hannibal has already performed a Xerxes-like operation: he

<sup>49</sup> Hardie (1986) 85–156.

<sup>50</sup> See [Chapter 2.1](#), pp. 93–5 and Giusti (2016a). On the historical allegory behind Virgil's Carthage episode see [Chapter 4](#) and Giusti (2017).

<sup>51</sup> On which see Galasso (1995) 136–7 and Nisbet-Rudd (2004) 55–6.

<sup>52</sup> Captured by the Carthaginians in 255 BCE and sent back to Rome to negotiate a peace, he urged the Senate to reject Carthage's proposals. The whole story, left unmentioned by Polybius, may be fictitious but serves as a famous paradigm at Rome at least since the time of Cicero, see Nisbet-Rudd (2004) 80–1.

<sup>53</sup> Feldherr (2009) 311, cf. 317.

has constructed a bridge of vessels and used it to break the force of a river's current (Liv. 21.27; Pol. 3.42–3). The river in question is no small stream but the Rhone itself, 'a mighty river' (Liv. 21.30.5 *Rhodanum, tantum amnem*), which Hannibal has crossed, 'in the teeth of so many thousands of Gauls, overcoming, too, the violence of the stream itself' (21.30.5 *tot milibus Gallorum prohibentibus, domita etiam ipsius fluminis vi traiecit*). According to Gottfried Mader, such operations have 'an unmistakable hybristic tinge' in their presentation of what looks like a 'triumph over the forces of nature',<sup>54</sup> after which Hannibal is ready to cross the Alps in an 'interminable march' (21.29.7 *iter immensum*) in order to 'wipe out the Roman name and liberate the whole world' (21.30.3 *ad delendum nomen Romanorum liberandumque orbem terrarum*).<sup>55</sup> While the use of the Xerxes paradigm in connection with Hannibal's river crossing (the Ebro, the Rhone and the Po) has already been noted by scholars in the account of Polybius,<sup>56</sup> the hubristic character of Livy's Hannibal and its development find further parallels with Xerxes, as narrated by Herodotus. In both stories, we find the stock figure of a 'tragic warner' who foreshadows the ultimate defeat: the anti-Barcid Carthaginian Hanno, in Livy's third decade,<sup>57</sup> and Xerxes' uncle, Artabanus, who in Book 7 of Herodotus seems to be 'setting the wisdom of classical Greek tragedy against Persian tradition'.<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, in both works, Xerxes' march against Hellas and Hannibal's march against Rome are preceded by a deceitful dream which curiously foretells the success of the operation and thus pushes the commanders towards their defeat.<sup>59</sup> In the case of Xerxes, the king had been persuaded by Artabanus to give up the military operation when he dreamt of 'a tall and goodly man' (Hdt. 7.12 ἄνδρα ... μέγαν τε καὶ εὐεϊδέα) inciting him not to change his

<sup>54</sup> Mader (1993) 218. On the similarities between Hannibal crossing the Rhone and Xerxes crossing the Hellespont, see also Steiner (2013) 84–6.

<sup>55</sup> Liv. 21.30.3 refers to the crossing of the Ebro.

<sup>56</sup> See Clarke (1999) 99–100 on Pol. 3.6.2, 3.44.1 and 3.66.6.

<sup>57</sup> Liv. 21.3, 10–11; 23.12–13; 30.20, 42; see Cipriani (1984) 62–85, Mader (1993) 209–13, Levene (2010) 109–10.

<sup>58</sup> Evans (1961) 109. On the figure of the warner in Herodotus see Bischoff (1932).

<sup>59</sup> See Steiner (2013) 91–4.

plans. In the second (Hdt. 7.14) and third recurrences of these visions, the last one directed to Artabanus (Hdt. 7.17), the man of the dream explicitly declares that if Xerxes does not obey his orders, soon he will be ‘brought low’ (Hdt. 7.14 *ταπεινὸς ὀπίσω κατὰ τάχος ἔσσει*). Similarly, before crossing the Alps, Hannibal dreams of ‘a youth of godlike aspect, who declared that he was sent by Jupiter to lead him into Italy’ (Liv. 21.22.6 *in quiete uisum ab eo iuuenem diuina specie, qui se ab Ioue diceret ducem in Italiam Hannibali missum*). Hannibal is invited to follow the youth without turning his eyes away from the guide, but as soon as he weakens and looks behind him, he sees the image of a giant serpent bringing destruction to the forests, followed by a storm. This dream is interpreted as ‘the devastation of Italy’ (Liv. 21.22.9 *uastitatem Italiae*), a sign that Hannibal has ‘to go on without enquiring further’ (Liv. 21.22.9 *pergeret porro ire nec ultra inquireret*), and which thus pushes the commander, ‘delighted at the vision’ (Liv. 21.23.1 *hoc uisu laetus*), towards the crossing of the Ebro.<sup>60</sup> In both cases, Hannibal and Xerxes are presented as hubristic characters who are nothing more than pawns in the hands of history and destiny, and the dream plays a crucial part in their respective tragedies. What is true for Xerxes is also true for Hannibal: ‘a man who is fated for destruction is forced to commit *hybris*; the fate of Xerxes, like the doom of Oedipus, was not quite within human control’.<sup>61</sup>

While there are some examples of the adoption of Persian imagery for Carthage in Augustan literature (and we will see in [Chapter 2](#) Virgil’s use of Persian imagery for his Carthage in the *Aeneid*), it is undeniable that in this period barbarians and Persians are more obviously relevant to contemporary history, and especially apt for evoking the Actian triumph against ‘Egypt’ and the conflict against Parthia. Thus Augustan Rome was presented as the ultimate heir of Athens, superior both to the original model and to the Hellenistic kingdoms that had previously emulated it. As Paul Zanker succinctly puts it, ‘just as in the heroic victories of Athens, Actium was

<sup>60</sup> On Hannibal’s dream, see [Chapter 3](#), pp. 181–4.

<sup>61</sup> Evans (1961) 110.

Augustus's triumph over the so-called eastern barbarian':<sup>62</sup> the Gigantomachic aspects of the battle as represented on Aeneas' shield in *Aeneid* 8 have been under the spotlight since Hardie's *Cosmos and Imperium*,<sup>63</sup> and the proposed association of Antony with the Centaurs in *Ode* 2.12<sup>64</sup> is further confirmed by Propertius' mention of the threatening Centaurs from the prows of Antony's ships (Prop. 4.6.49), which is matched by the iconography of the battle of Actium found in the Medinaceli reliefs.<sup>65</sup> Amazonomachy also seems to have featured as a symbol of the war against oriental Cleopatra: it decorated both the pediment of the temple of Apollo Sosianus and a marble base in Nicopolis which was probably meant to sustain a statue of Augustus in heroic pose.<sup>66</sup> Apart from mythological allegories, the Persian Wars themselves became a mytho-historical example, for there is evidence that the battle of Salamis must have worked as a model for Actium: while in 2 BCE, among the celebrations for the Forum of Augustus and as an auspicious dispatch for Gaius Caesar's campaign against the Parthians in Armenia, Salamis was staged in the form of an entertaining naumachia in a specially excavated arena by the Tiber,<sup>67</sup> Tonio Hölscher has argued that, on the basis of a group of Roman reliefs scattered throughout the empire, the neo-Attic decorative art of the early Augustan period created a pair of iconographic prototypes which glorified Actium on the one side and Salamis on the other.<sup>68</sup> Moreover, the suggestion that iconographic imagery from Salamis was exploited on Actian monuments also seems to be confirmed by a sculpted warship ram, currently in the collection Zeri in Mentana, decorated with a gorgoneion and the owl of Athena in the action of claspings a small bird.<sup>69</sup> The same motif of Octavian as liberator from

<sup>62</sup> Zanker (1988) 84; cf. Hardie (2007a) 130.

<sup>63</sup> Hardie (1986) 362–6.

<sup>64</sup> See above, p. 25.

<sup>65</sup> Although these may be adapted precisely from Propertius' poem; see Schäfer (2013), Hardie (ed.) (2016) 17, Biggs (2016, unpublished).

<sup>66</sup> See La Rocca (1985) 89–90.

<sup>67</sup> *RG* 23, Dio 55.10.7, Ovid *Ars* 1.171–2 with Spawforth (1994) 238 and (2012) 105, Hardie (2007a) 129.

<sup>68</sup> Hölscher (1984) and (2009) 321–4.

<sup>69</sup> See Romeo (1998) 123–4.

barbarians also features in a Greek encomiastic epigram for the victory at Actium (*SH* 982), in which Octavian's arrival in Egypt is hailed as the advent of Zeus Ἐλευθέριος – an epithet typically attributed to Zeus in connection with the 'liberation' of Greece from the barbarian threat.<sup>70</sup>

Apart from Actium, barbarian imagery also features in celebration of Augustus' diplomatic success in Parthia in 21 BCE and of his victory in Illyria, celebrated as part of his triple triumph in 29 BCE: in 1986, Rolf Schneider interpreted three kneeling pavonazetto Parthians as supports for a monumental bronze tripod in honour of Augustus' Parthian 'victory', arguing that the original model had to be recognised in the tripod column set up at Delphi in celebration of Plataea.<sup>71</sup> Finally, the temple of Palatine Apollo, as described by Propertius in *Elegy* 2.31, included statues of the Danaids (2.31.4) and a representation of Brennus' Gauls' failed attempt to sack Delphi's treasure in 278 BCE (2.31.13 *deiectos Parnasi uertice Gallos*, 'the Gauls cast down from Parnassus' peak').<sup>72</sup> While the Danaids have plausibly been connected to Cleopatra's Egypt,<sup>73</sup> it makes sense to read the Galatomachy as an evocation of the Illyrian victory. Undoubtedly, this revival of fifth-century Athenian discourse on the barbarian betrays a Hellenistic pedigree: Gigantomachy, Amazonomachy, Persianomachy and Galatomachy are the four subjects of a dedication and monument set on the Athenian Acropolis by an Attalid ruler (Paus. 1.25.2) in an attempt to fashion Attalus I's victory over the Galatians in around 230 BCE in the image of the Greek victory over Persia.<sup>74</sup> The restoration of this monument and its re-dedication seem to have been decreed by Augustus himself.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>70</sup> See Barbantani (1998) 301.

<sup>71</sup> Schneider (1986); Spawforth (1994) 238–9 suggests a Hadrianic dating, but in (2012) 104 he agrees with the Augustan; C. B. Rose (2005) 24 n. 22 expresses scepticism; cf. also Hardie (2007a) 130. More generally on representations of the Parthians under Augustus see Schneider (1998) and C. B. Rose (2005).

<sup>72</sup> On the supernatural/atmospherical phenomena that protected the treasure see Paus. 10.23.1–4.

<sup>73</sup> Simon (1986) 24, Gurval (1995) 123–7.

<sup>74</sup> Stewart (2004) argues for Attalus I and dates the monument to around 200 BCE.

<sup>75</sup> SEG 26.121 = IG ii2 1035, see Spawforth (2012) 106–17. Scholars such as Beatrice Palma and Carlo Gasparri have also dated to the Augustan period the so-called

Moreover, it has also been suggested that the monopteros of Roma and Augustus on the Athenian Acropolis was built as an Athenian response to the recovery of the Parthian standards and thus stood in explicit continuity with both the fifth-century Athenian and the Attalid monuments.<sup>76</sup> The Hellenistic vein is also evident in the literary texts: Propertius' description of the Gauls' defeat is openly reminiscent of the Galatomachy of Callimachus' fourth *Hymn* (Call. *Del.* 171–87), in turn compared to a Titanomachy in an encomiastic praise of Ptolemy II Philadelphus' defeat of a body of mutinous Gallic mercenaries as a triumph of civilisation over barbarism.<sup>77</sup>

The Augustan insistence on representations of barbarians and oriental enemies can easily be explained in political terms. It was necessary for the regime to bolster *metus hostilis* in order to cover the memory of civil strife and at the same time justify Augustus' rule. And yet this superficial interpretation does not take into account the way in which these barbarian images eventually end up betraying the anxieties that surrounded the new regime through their own efforts to conceal them. As Philip Hardie puts it with reference to the Neronian context, the Romans' fascination with Xerxes 'has not a little to do with the anxiety that the emperor might be tempted to play the part of an eastern tyrant',<sup>78</sup> and indeed he shows how Xerxes, Hannibal and Alexander all become perverted models of power both for the Caesar of Lucan's *Bellum Ciuile* and for the Roman of Juvenal's tenth *Satire*.<sup>79</sup> Albeit less explicitly, Augustan literature also invokes subtle analogies between Xerxes and the Princesps. This is the case, for instance, of the apparent praise of the so-called *portus Iulius* in the *Georgics* (*G.* 2.161–4),<sup>80</sup> which is presented by Virgil as

'Little Barbarians', Roman copies of the Attalid statues, but Stewart (2004) 136 argues for the first quarter of the second century CE.

<sup>76</sup> C. B. Rose (2005) 50–2; but see the objections in Spawforth (2012) 106–7 with bibliography.

<sup>77</sup> See Fedeli (2005) 881–2.

<sup>78</sup> Hardie (2007a) 133.

<sup>79</sup> Hardie (2007a) 133–6.

<sup>80</sup> The harbour was effectively made by Agrippa in 37–36 BCE but obviously counted as a glory of Octavian (cf. *G.* 2.163 *Iulia* ... *unda*, 'the Julian wave'). It was created by joining lake Lucrinus and lake Avernus and strengthening the strip of land

a forceful transgression of nature not at all dissimilar to the hubristic actions of Xerxes. As Richard Thomas notes, there is something very uncanny in the description of the sea water roaring with indignation against the barrier (*G.* 2.161–2 *portus Lucrinoque addita claustra | atque indignatum magnis stridoribus aequor*, ‘the harbours, and the barrier thrown across the Lucrinus, and the water roaring aloud in anger’); these lines in turn foreshadow the indignation of the river Araxes on Aeneas’ shield at Augustus’ replacing of the bridge built by Alexander the Great (*A.* 8.728 *pontem indignatus Araxes*, ‘Araxes chafing at his bridge’), a passage on which Servius Auctus explicitly remarks that the first attempt at taming those waters was made by Xerxes himself.<sup>81</sup> Thomas’s suspicion of the Xerxean, and Alexandrian, connotations of the Princeps seems confirmed shortly afterwards, when Caesar is praised for his victories in Asia (*G.* 2.170–2) as the climax of a short list of vigorous Italian breeds, immediately preceded by the heroes of the Punic Wars, ‘the Scipios, hard at war’ (2.170 *Scipiadus duros bello*). Two of these, the Africani, betray associations with Xerxes already in the Republican tradition.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, it is difficult to escape the fact that Augustan discourse on oriental enemies coexisted with an obsessive memory of the eastern origins of the Romans’ ancestors and, more directly, of the Julian family. Together with the oriental connotations of Aeneas and the Trojans in the *Aeneid*, analysed more closely in [Chapter 2](#), the difficult interaction of Phrygian and Parthian iconography<sup>83</sup> is the sign of a widespread ambiguity regarding

separating Lucrinus from the sea with a breakwater in which an entrance for ships was cut.

<sup>81</sup> Serv. *ad A.* 728 *fluuius Armeniae, quem pontibus nisus est Xerxes conscendere*, ‘a river in Armenia, which Xerxes tried to mount with bridges’. See Thomas (1988) 186–7.

<sup>82</sup> On Lucretius’ juxtaposition of Xerxes with the elder Africanus see below, p. 73; on the model of Xerxes in the famous scene of the younger Africanus’ tears in front of Carthage in flames see [Chapter 4.5.1](#), p. 256. Also note that *durus*, the epithet that qualifies the Scipios at *G.* 2.170, is typically attributed to Hannibal by Horace (as at *Carm.* 2.12.2), used interchangeably with *dirus*, see Nisbet–Hubbard (1978) 185; Stocks (2014) 27–9. On the mirroring between Scipio and Hannibal see especially Rossi (2004b).

<sup>83</sup> The Parthians were often represented as wearing Phrygian caps, or sculpted in pavonazzetto marble, which the ancients incidentally called ‘Phrygian marble’.

Rome's ethnic identity in the Augustan age. Indeed, it cannot have been unproblematic that the same regime that promoted an anti-barbarian ideology was also simultaneously the one that most needed to stress Rome's Phrygian origin in order to legitimise the Julian rule.

With this last point in mind we can return briefly to Propertius 2.1 and read between the lines of this apparent anti-barbarian panegyric for the Princeps. As emphasised by Robert Gurval,<sup>84</sup> there is little in Propertius' list of Caesar's battles (Prop. 2.1.27–34) that can be recognised as honest praise for the victor. In the first line of the list, Mutina is just a name, and Philippi is pathetically preceded by an apposition, 'tombs of Roman citizens' (2.1.27 *ciuilia busta Philippos*), whose adjective emphasises the civil nature of the conflict and anticipates the memory of the Perusine slaughter by an intertextual echo of 1.22.3 (*Perusina ... patriae ... sepulcra*).<sup>85</sup> There follows Naulochus, described by an elliptical expression at best, which stresses the cowardice of the defeated rather than the prowess of the victor (2.1.28 *Siculae classica bella fugae*, 'the naval war, the Sicilian flight'),<sup>86</sup> and finally Perugia, perhaps too painful for Propertius to be named, 'the overturned hearths of Etruria's ancient race' (2.1.29 *euersosque focos antiquae gentis Etruscae*).<sup>87</sup> The troubling expressions used in this list also end up spoiling the four celebratory lines dedicated to the battle of Actium (2.1.30–4). As Gurval puts it, these lines, by inverting the actual order of Augustus' triumph and parading Egypt before the 'Actian prow' (2.1.34 *Actia ... rostra*), 'shatter the

On these and other interactions between Phrygian and Parthian iconography see Schneider (1998) 109–10 and especially C. B. Rose (2005).

<sup>84</sup> Gurval (1995) 167–79.

<sup>85</sup> See Fedeli (2005) 66, who also notes the elder Pliny's use of a similar expression for Cannae (*NH* 15.76) and a possible echo of the *commune sepulcrum* of Catullus' Troy (Cat. 68.89).

<sup>86</sup> On the difficulties of this phrase, see Fedeli (2005) 67, Gurval (1995) 175 n. 14; Goold's Loeb and Heyworth (2007) 107 translate 'the rout off Sicily'; compare the description of Sextus' flight to Messina after his defeat at Naulochus in Hor. *Epod.* 9.8 *dux fugit ustis nauibus*, 'the general fled, his ships being burnt'.

<sup>87</sup> Both Gurval (1995) 175 and Fedeli (2005) 68 stress the sacrilegious connotations of this phrase, which perhaps hides the memory of the slaughter of 300 Roman senators and knights at the altar of Divus Julius.



fragile illusion that the victorious general endeavoured to create by his carefully orchestrated arrangement of triumphs'<sup>88</sup> and serve as a poignant reminder of the unnatural nature of this *Civil War*.

This pessimistic reading of *Elegy* 2.1 also encompasses the themes previously proposed in the *recusatio* by turning the parallel between Carthage and Persia into a disturbing association between these two powers and Rome itself. As Gurval notes, the themes presented here – the battle of the Giants (19–20), the cautionary tales of Thebes and Troy (21), Xerxes' and Carthage's arrogance (22–3) and the 'threats' of the Cimbri (24) – are all episodes of hubristic defeat.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, Thebes (21) inevitably evokes Civil War, a topic which is picked up by the pathetic mention of Remus, rather than Romulus, as symbolic for the foundation of Rome (23), clearly calling to mind the curse of a city founded on fratricide.<sup>90</sup> When looked at in this light, *Elegy* 2.1 comes close to Horace's *Epode* 7, a famous cry to alert Roman citizens to the sacrilegious nature of Civil War, which attempts a call to arms against barbarians (Carthaginians, Britons and Parthians, *Epod.* 7.5–10), but ends on the fatal recognition that Rome is a city doomed to fratricidal strife from its very foundation (*Epod.* 7.19–20 *ut inmerentis fluxit in terram Remi | sacer nepotibus cruor*, 'ever since the blood of blameless Remus was spilt upon the ground, to be a curse upon posterity'). Both in *Elegy* 2.1 and in *Epode* 7 Carthage is assimilated to Persia and Parthia respectively to foster *metus hostilis* and discourage civil conflict, but the city tragically ends up serving instead as a cautionary tale and a veritable mirror for Rome while in the grip of Civil War. In *Epode* 7, the 'haughty citadel of envious Carthage' that the Roman should burn down (*Epod.* 7.5–6 *ut superbas inuidiae Carthaginis | Romanus arces ureret*) anticipates the mirroring contrast between Carthage and Rome that will open Virgil's

<sup>88</sup> Gurval (1995) 179.

<sup>89</sup> Gurval (1995) 173.

<sup>90</sup> I agree with Gurval (1995) 172 that the metrical explanation for the presence of Remus at Prop. 2.1.23 is insufficient (poets can easily use *Quirini* in place of the unmetrical *Romuli*).

*Aeneid*, where the two cities ‘look against’ each other geographically (*A.* 1.13 *Karthago Italiam contra*, ‘Carthage, over against Italy’),<sup>91</sup> although in the *Aeneid* it is not the Carthaginians but the Romans – the people who will ‘one day overthrow the Tyrian citadel’ (*A.* 1.20 *Tyrias olim quae uerteret arces*) – who are accused of *superbia* (21 *populum late regem belloque superbum*, ‘widely kings and haughty in war’).<sup>92</sup> Moreover, Carthage in the *Aeneid* will be introduced as a twin city of Troy, to which it is tied by more than one linguistic echo.<sup>93</sup> The same chain of associations between Troy, Carthage and Rome (which we will dissect more closely in [Chapter 2](#)) is found in Propertius 2.1, where ‘the pride of lofty Carthage’ (2.1.23 *animos Carthaginis altae*) is juxtaposed, in the list of rejected topics, not solely with the arrogance of Xerxes and the sad destinies of Phoenician Thebes and Troy, but with Rome itself, the city doomed to Civil War since its very foundation. In this light, the mirroring between Thebes and Troy in line 21 and between Carthage and Rome in line 23 takes the shape of an ominous foreboding.

It is easier to explain this transformation of the enemy into ‘the enemy within’ in the literature produced just after the traumatic events of the Civil Wars and in an era fraught with anxieties surrounding a new autocratic rule. However, it must be kept in mind that the potential for dissolution is implied in any polarisation of this sort. On the one hand, the concept of the ‘other’, the ‘stranger’, the ‘barbarian’ is in its very conception applicable to any unwanted or potentially dangerous individual of a given community in order to justify their potential ostracisation. On the other hand, the conceptualisation of the ‘other’ also serves as cautionary tale, both in terms of a powerful behavioural warning, a way to think about the disturbing

<sup>91</sup> The expression is read since Servius Danielis as encapsulating enmity and emulation, see [Chapter 2.2.1 n. 42](#).

<sup>92</sup> In the Sallustian view, it is precisely the destruction of Carthage and the disappearance of *metus hostilis* that passes haughtiness over to the Romans (Sall. *BJ* 41.2 *sed ubi illa formido mentibus decessit ... lasciua atque suberbia incessere*, ‘but as the minds of the people were relieved of that dread ... wantonness and arrogance naturally arose’).

<sup>93</sup> Cf. *A.* 1.12 *Vrbs antiqua fuit* and 2.363 *urbs antiqua ruit*; 1.14 *diues opum* and 2.22 *diues opum* with the discussion in [Chapter 2.2.1](#) pp. 99–101.

and undesirable aspects of one's own community, and as an instrument for providing social cohesion through a feeling of shared, collective identity.<sup>94</sup> In what follows, we shall go back in time first to suggest the existence of the polarisations of Carthaginians as barbarians already in the mid-Republic, and secondly to deconstruct such polarisations, showing how the mirroring between Rome and Carthage can be detected already in the aftermath of the Hannibalic War, even though it will only gain full tragic resonance when exploited in connection with the crisis of the Republic and its internal discord.

### 1.3 Barbarian Carthaginians?

The development of an allegorical imagery for barbarians and historical events on the Athenian theatrical stage is connected to a famous anecdote which testifies to the necessity of mediated and distorted communication when dealing with traumatic history. This is the incident, preserved by Herodotus (6.21), that Phrynichus was fined a thousand drachmae after the production of his 'Sack of Miletus' (Μιλήτου ἄλωσις) during which 'the whole theatre broke into tears' (ἐξ δάκρυά τε ἔπεσε τὸ θέητρον) 'for bringing to mind a calamity that touched them so nearly' (ὥς ἀναμνήσαντα οἰκῆια κακά). This anecdote attests, along with the strong emotional impact caused by theatrical performances in ancient societies,<sup>95</sup> a blurring of individuality through the creation of a 'theatrical community' which brought about an equivalence of personal issues and national affairs. Such an observation is essential for a correct understanding of subsequent Athenian tragic productions, and perhaps also of the early Latin ones.<sup>96</sup> Whatever view is

<sup>94</sup> On this function of Thebes as the 'other' for Athens, see especially Zeitlin (1986). Zeitlin's conclusions have been applied to Carthage and Rome by Hardie (1990) and Feeney (2007) 52–7.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. the famous anecdote of the pregnant women who miscarried upon the entrance of the *Eumenides*' chorus (*Vita Aeschyli* 9 = *TGF* 3 T Al.30–2 Radt).

<sup>96</sup> Goldenhard (2010) 164–6, partly preceded by Stärk (2000), reacts against the tendency to interpret Republican tragedy as a civic occasion on the model of fifth-century Athens and even expresses reservations about the political dimension of Athenian plays, but see the criticisms of Cowan (2010b) and Feeney (2016) 139.

taken on the involvement of Athenian tragedy in the politics of the day,<sup>97</sup> it is evident that drama, insofar as it necessitates an audience which is in itself an embryonic form of community, has always been the literary genre with public resonances of the broadest and most immediate kind. In its media-like quality as a vehicle for the circulation of public, national, ‘propagandistic’ issues, it enabled a social impact on ancient societies comparable to that of visual representations.<sup>98</sup> As is well known, both Phrynichus’ ‘Sack of Miletus’ and another historical play of his variously known as *Persae*, *Dikaioi* or *Synthokoi* (Phrynichus fr. 4a) are lost, and Aeschylus’ *Persae* remains a *unicum* in its genre, which demonstrates that the staging of historical themes was only possible in an early and still experimental phase of Greek tragedy. Later, it was preferred to distance the memory of the Persian Wars through metaphorical recourse to myth, in particular to the Trojan saga, in which the Phrygians acquired those oriental connotations that are not straightforwardly found in the Homeric poems.<sup>99</sup> The same attitude towards the Persian Wars is attested by Athenian iconography of the time: Gigantomachies, Amazonomachies and pictures of the Trojan War came to replace and signify the Greek resistance to the barbarian East.<sup>100</sup> A curtain of silence was dropped over the Persian Wars on the Athenian tragic stage, and the game of recognition started: it worked, like literary criticism, though on the collective level, through detection and disputation of metaphor, prefiguration, historical allegory.

As Spawforth puts it, and as we have partially seen in the previous section, this ‘original narrative ... by the time of Augustus ... had become a chain story, since later Greek powers in combat with barbarians – Alexander, the Aetolians and the Attalids – serially compared their struggles with the Graeco-Persian Wars when they in turn presented themselves

<sup>97</sup> See Euben (ed.) (1986). The debate saw especially Goldhill (1987) vs. Griffin (1998); see also Goldhill (2000) and Rhodes (2003).

<sup>98</sup> See E. Hall (1989) 67 and (1993).

<sup>99</sup> See E. Hall (1989) 20–40.

<sup>100</sup> See E. Hall (1989) 67–8 and (1993).

as champions of (Greek) civilisation'.<sup>101</sup> It is the purpose of this section to suggest that the anti-barbarian imagery found in the Augustan age had already been applied to the Carthaginians in the middle Republic. It is certain that mid-Republican Rome came into contact with Greek representations of barbarians and their Hellenistic reappraisal; it is also probable that, given the equation between Carthaginians and Persians in the Greek and Sicilian traditions, Naevius and Ennius would have been receptive to Hellenistic literature's anti-barbarian vein. In the next section, we will attempt to apply Phrynichus' lesson to the early Roman stage, suggesting that if the tragedies performed at Rome during the Punic Wars were mostly mythological rather than historical, this does not indicate that they had no collective or political value. On the contrary, the multiplication and increase in the length of such representations precisely during the years of the Second Punic War, together with the Romans' attested preference for Trojan or barbarian themes, may reflect an obsession with questions of identity and otherness while Rome was under threat of a foreign, if less than barbarian, invasion.

The question mark in this section's title is a necessary caveat for the hypothetical nature of the suggestions here proposed, since in stark contrast to the Augustan age we have very little evidence of connections between Carthaginians and Persians from the time of the Punic Wars. However, this has not hindered individual scholars from dating the association back to the middle Republic, mostly on the basis of a fragment from Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*, which – as discussed below – is clearly part of the ecphrasis of a Gigantomachy, but whose connection with the Punic conflict is unfortunately far from certain.<sup>102</sup> As far as direct evidence goes, the only straightforward comparison

<sup>101</sup> Spawforth (2012) 105.

<sup>102</sup> Thus Feeney (1991) 117–20, (2007) 56–7 and (2016) 124–5; Dufallo (2013) 16–20 and Biggs (2014) 239–40, who also suggests that the first public example of triumphal painting in Rome, the so-called *tabula Valeria*, placed by the consul Manius Valerius Messalla in 263 BCE on the wall of the *curia Hostilia* and depicting his victory over the Carthaginians and Hieron in Sicily (Pl. *NH* 35.22), 'converted the Senate house into a space symbolically akin to the Stoa Poikile', although the parallel is nowhere explicitly proposed in our ancient sources. Dench (1995) 72–3

between Persians and Carthaginians from the mid-Republic is found in a fragment of Cato, where the absence of publicity accorded to the deeds of an anonymous tribune of the First Punic War is contrasted with the glory granted by the Greeks to the Spartan Leonidas:<sup>103</sup>

Leonides Laco, qui simile apud Thermopylas fecit, propter eius uirtutes omnis Graecia gloriam atque gratiam praecipuam claritudinis inclitissimae decorauere monumentis: signis, statuis, elogiis, historiis aliisque rebus gratissimum id eius factum habuere; at tribuno militum parua laus pro factis relict, qui idem fecerat atque rem seruauerat.

(Cato *Orig.* fr. 76 Cornell, *ap.* Gell. 3.7.19)

In the case of the Laconian Leonides, who did something similar at Thermopylae, because of his valour all Greece has adorned his glory and exceptional esteem with memorials of the highest distinction; by pictures, statues, and honorary inscriptions, in their histories, and in other ways, they have treated that deed of his as most deserving of gratitude; but the military tribune, who had done the same thing and saved the state, gained small glory for his deeds.

It is true that the focus of Cato's fragment does not lie in a parallel between the Persians and the Carthaginians, but rather between the different cultural responses to the deeds of the 300 Spartans led by Leonidas and to those of the 400 Romans led by the tribune.<sup>104</sup> Instead of invoking an association between Romans and Spartans, Cato is arguing for the superiority of the Roman army in terms of equality among its members. Nonetheless, it is also clear that Cato, who is at the same time paying homage to and challenging Herodotus<sup>105</sup> as part of the general Roman fashion of 'self-consciously build(ing) up their own history in the light of Greek history',<sup>106</sup> is paradoxically utilising Greek cultural standards when assessing the

suggests a concurrence of Persian and Carthaginian stereotypes in the *Poenulus*, but see *contra* Prag (2010) 53 and below, pp. 81–2.

<sup>103</sup> On Cato's fragment, see Chassignet (1986) 87–9, Gruen (1992) 82, Calboli (1996), Krebs (2006), Cornell (ed.) (2013.11) 121–4 and Biggs (2014) 176–84. The comparison will be further endorsed by Cicero (*Tusc.* 1.101), Seneca (*Ep.* 81.22) and Florus (1.18.13). Text and translation are taken from Cornell (ed.) (2013).

<sup>104</sup> The figure of 400 is *lectio difficilior*, since 300 is also given in other reports: see Cornell (ed.) (2013.11) 121.

<sup>105</sup> See Krebs (2006).

<sup>106</sup> Momigliano (1990) 107.

Romans' superiority to the Greeks. Anonymity, recognised by Ulrich Gotter as Cato's (counter)revolutionary polemic strategy to the annalistic tradition,<sup>107</sup> is 'the subsumption of the individual into the collectivity of the *polis* ... a basic factor in fifth-century Athenian democratic ideology'.<sup>108</sup> It is an integral part of anti-Persian discourse, and as such it is reflected in Aeschylus' *Persae*, where there are 'lengthy lists of Persian names', but no individual Greek is named.<sup>109</sup> Just as Cato fashions the Punic Wars in emulation and competition with the Persian Wars, we will also see how Livy, when presenting the Hannibalic War as the 'most memorable of wars ever waged' (Liv. 21.1.1 *bellum maxime omnium memorabile quae umquam gesta sint*), portrays himself as challenging both Herodotus and Thucydides, thus placing the Second Punic War at the end of the progressive line of the greatest wars of history, trumping the Trojan, the Persian and the Peloponnesian.<sup>110</sup>

While it is true that the absence of positive evidence does not allow us to trace the assimilation between Carthaginians and Persians to the middle Republic with absolute certainty, there are valid reasons why such a parallel has been proposed in the past. To start with, fifth-century Athenian imagery of the fight against barbarians in its allegorical form was not only popular, or at any rate well known, at Rome's immediate borders (Etruria<sup>111</sup> and Magna Graecia), but it appears to have been used by the Romans themselves in connection with other enemies, perhaps since the late fourth century and certainly in the early second.<sup>112</sup> While Samnites

<sup>107</sup> Gotter (2003).

<sup>108</sup> Goldhill (2002) 59.

<sup>109</sup> Goldhill (2002) 58.

<sup>110</sup> See Chapter 3.2, p. 152.

<sup>111</sup> On the Etruscan reception of Attalid Galatomachies see Bienkowski (1908) 79–92, Scheider (1992) 913 (also on Alexander's Persianomachy), Ferris (2000) 13–16. On Amazonomachies and Gigantomachies on Etruscan reliefs and vases see Hanfmann (1937), although they do not appear to have retained the original Athenian meaning. The Etruscan reception of these themes is especially worth mentioning because of the priority of the Etruscans' adoption of Greek theatrical culture and the role probably played by Etruria in shaping the features of early Roman theatre, on which see Oakley (1998) 40–72 and Manuwald (2011) 22–6.

<sup>112</sup> Strobel (1994) 92 gives 189 BCE (the war against Antiochus III) as the earliest safe date for the Romans' adoption of the anti-Persian paradigm.

fighting against Hellenised Romans appear depicted as barbarians in a late fourth-century series of vases from Daunian Arpi,<sup>113</sup> it has also been proposed that the Hellenistic type of Gigantomachic Zeus, represented with thunderbolt in hand in a quadriga driven by Nike, may have been adopted in the third century in connection with Celtic and (later) Carthaginians threats.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, certain evidence for the Roman use of not only allegorical imagery but the Persian paradigm itself is dated to the early second century in relation to eastern campaigns, the First and Second Macedonian Wars (211–197 BCE) and the conflict against Antiochus (192–188 BCE).<sup>115</sup> The barbarian tag is applied to Philip V of Macedon at around the time of the battle of Cynoscephalae (197 BCE) in a series of epigrams by the Greek poet Alcaeus of Messene and possibly by the Attalids as well, whose ‘little barbarians’ donated to the Athenian Acropolis would have alluded to Philip according to Andrew Stewart’s reconstruction.<sup>116</sup> Two of Alcaeus’ epigrams compare Philip to the Cyclops and a Centaur respectively (*Anth. Pal.* 9.519 and 11.12), and I think that Charles Edson was right to consider *Anth. Pal.* 9.518 sarcastic praise of the ruler, with

<sup>113</sup> See Dench (2003) 300. Another piece of evidence from the late fourth/early third century for the receptivity of Greek anti-barbarian imagery in non-Greek Italic cultures is a Paestan tomb painting (now unfortunately destroyed and only known from nineteenth-century drawings) which curiously applies Greek anti-barbarian imagery against Greeks, depicting the fight of a Paestan warrior against an Amazon and a Greek in a Phrygian-type helmet: see Dench (1995) 66 and (2003) 300. On depictions of Persians and the use of anti-barbarian imagery in South Italy see Dench (2003) 302–3 with bibliography.

<sup>114</sup> The Roman prototype was first represented atop the pediment of the Capitoline temple, erected by the Ogulnii in 296 BCE, the year before the battle against the Celtic–Samnite coalition at Sentinum; the type was then represented on a series of *quadrigati* first issued in 225 BCE in probable connection with the Gallic threat, but even more popular during the Hannibalic War. See Fears (1981) 34–43 and Feeney (1991) 119.

<sup>115</sup> But see also the intriguing suggestion by Zorzetti (1991) 318 that Marcus Claudius Marcellus’ temple to *Honos et Virtus*, vowed after the battle of Clastidium in 222 BCE, may owe its title to the αἰδῶ συνεργὸν ἀρετᾶς of a fragment of Timotheus’ *Persians* (fr. 16 Edmonds). The application of the barbarian paradigm to the Antigonids is interesting in view of Nicholas Purcell’s proposed symmetries between the Macedonian and the Punic Wars, ending with the synchronised sacks of Corinth and Carthage: see Purcell (1995).

<sup>116</sup> See Stewart (2004) 220–6; on the Attalid monument see above, p. 42.



accusations of Gigantic behaviour.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, *Anth. Pal.* 16.5 contains an indirect association between Philip and Xerxes, when Titus Quinctius Flaminius is hailed as the liberator of Hellas:

Ἄγαγε καὶ Ξέρξης Πέρσαν στρατὸν Ἑλλάδος ἐς γᾶν,  
καὶ Τίτος εὐρείας ἄγαγ' ἀπ' Ἰταλίας  
ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν Εὐρώπᾳ δοῦλον ζυγὸν αὐχένι θήσων  
ἦλθεν, ὁ δ' ἀμπαύσων Ἑλλάδα δουλοσύνας.

(*Anth. Pal.* 16.5)

Both Xerxes led a Persian host to the land of Hellas, and Titus, too, led there a host from broad Italy, but the one meant to set the yoke of slavery on the neck of Europe, the other to put an end to the servitude of Hellas.

(trans. W. R. Paton)

Further epigraphical and historiographical evidence demonstrates that the Romans were aware of the comparison put forward by Alcaeus. On the occasion of the evacuation of Acrocorinth in 194 BCE Flaminius was hailed *servatorem liberatoremque* (Livy 34.50.9, Pol. 18.46.12) that is, as Walbank notes, ‘the equivalent of σωτήρα καὶ ἐλευθέριον, the cult-titles under which Zeus was worshipped at Athens and Plataea for help against Persia’.<sup>118</sup> Moreover, both Momigliano and Walbank agree in suggesting that Ennius must have been influenced by Greek propagandistic literature in general, and by Alcaeus in particular,<sup>119</sup> since a fragment attributed by Priscian to Book 9 of the *Annales* contains a Cyclops simile which has been noted by Walbank as especially reminiscent of Alcaeus’ epigram:<sup>120</sup>

<sup>117</sup> Edson (1948), *contra* Momigliano (1942) and Walbank (1942) and (1943). On Ennius’ reception of this epigram, see below, p. 74.

<sup>118</sup> Walbank (1967) 613–14 with bibliography; see also Walbank (1942) 145 n. 1 and (1943) 8 on the epigram quoted in Plutarch (*Flam.* 12.6), where Flaminius is hailed for his gift of freedom and as a descendant of Aeneas. On ἐλευθέριος applied to Octavian in an encomiastic epigram for Actium see above, p. 42.

<sup>119</sup> Walbank (1943) 6 n. 4 with reference to the comparison between Ennius’ epitaph on Scipio and *Anth. Pal.* 16.6 in Momigliano (1942) 54 n. 5.

<sup>120</sup> Walbank (1943) 6 n. 4 raises some doubts regarding the application of the simile to Philip V, but see the certainty of Skutsch (1985) 496. Cf. also Fabrizi (2012) 172–7.

## Barbarian Carthaginians?

Cyclopis uenter uelut olim turserat alte  
carnibus humanis distentus

(Ennius *Ann.* fr. 319–20 Sk.)

As the belly of the Cyclops once swelled deeply, stretched by human flesh

πίομαι, ὧ Ληναῖε, πολὺ πλέον ἢ πίε Κύκλωψ  
νηδὺν ἀνδρομέων πλησάμενος κρεάων

(*Anth. Pal.* 9.519.1–2)

I drink, Bacchus, deeper than the Cyclops drunk when he had filled  
his belly with the flesh of men

Even though Ennius' lines likely refer to Philip V, it is noteworthy that in a poem dealing with the Second Punic War we find a Cyclops simile that would have nicely fitted Hannibal, 'the one-eyed general' (Juv. 10.158 *ducem ... luscum*) who lost an eye after the battle of the Trebia and whose Cyclopic behaviour will be highlighted much later by the Flavian poet Silius.<sup>121</sup> A similar situation is found with another pair of fragments from the *Annales*, which attest to a comparison with Xerxes' crossing of the Hellespont that would fit one of Hannibal's transgressions of nature, but is instead more plausibly related to Antiochus' movements towards Rome in 192 BCE. In the case of the first fragment, transmitted by Varro, our source reveals Xerxes as the clear subject of the phrase (Varro *LL* 7.21 = fr. 369 Sk. *isque Hellesponto pontem contendit in alto*, 'and he drew a bridge out over the deep Hellespont'), while the context of another fragment (fr. 370 Sk. *salsas lamas*, 'salt marshes') was reconstructed by putting together Servius Danielis' information that Ennius used the adjective *salsus* in relation to *lamae*<sup>122</sup> and a line from Lucretius (on which we shall say more below) referring to the *salsae lacunae* ('salt lakes') of the Hellespont crossed by Xerxes in a list of examples of mortality (Lucr. 3.1031). Given the Xerxes paradigm for Hannibal's river-crossing in both Polybius and Livy,<sup>123</sup> it would be tempting to extend the comparison to the Carthaginian commander. However, it is safer to follow

<sup>121</sup> See Giusti (2014a) 51–2 with bibliography.

<sup>122</sup> DServ. *ad A.* 2.173, see Skutsch (1985) 536–7.

<sup>123</sup> See above, p. 39.

Skutsch in referring it to the ‘crossing or anticipated crossing of the Hellespont by Antiochus’,<sup>124</sup> since the same comparison is later attested in Florus<sup>125</sup> and must have become a sort of commonplace after the battle of Thermopylae in 191 BCE. In a passage from Plutarch’s *Cato Maior* referring to that battle, Cato, the same man who compared a Roman tribune to Leonidas in a First Punic War context, now grasps the opportunity to embody and surpass the Roman Leonidas himself, saving his troops thanks to the memory of the Persian Wars.<sup>126</sup>

We will return to Ennius’ Hellespont fragment in order to test another identification which has been very recently proposed. But what interests us at this point is the recognition that the Persian or barbarian paradigm must by the time of Naevius and Ennius have become almost a commonplace tag of despotism, arrogance, luxury and foreignness, which could be applied irrespectively of ethnicity and provenance. As pointed out by Walbank,<sup>127</sup> it is likely that Alcaeus of Messene was turning the tables against Philip, responding to the attempts of Macedonian propaganda to cast the Romans in the role of the Persians, as also exemplified much later in Plutarch’s double Greek–Roman perspective in the *Parallel Lives* of *Flaminius* and *Philopoemen*.<sup>128</sup> Similarly, the same barbarian paradigm that we have just seen employed against Antiochus at Thermopylae is reported by Livy as turned upside down by

<sup>124</sup> Skutsch (1985) 535.

<sup>125</sup> Flor. 1.24.2 *non aliud formidolosius fama bellum fuit, quippe cum Persas et orientem, Xerxen atque Darium cogitarent, quando perfossi inuui montes, quando uelis opertum mare nuntiaretur* (‘report never represented any war as more formidable than this, as the Romans bethought them of the Persians and the East, of Xerxes and Darius, of the days when impassable mountains were said to have been cut through and the sea hidden with sails’) and 1.24.13 *ne sibi placeant Athenae; in Antiocho uicimus Xerxen, in Aemilio Alcibiaden aequauimus, Epheso Salamina pensauimus* (‘let not Athens be over-proud: in Antiochus we defeated a Xerxes; in Aemilius we had the equal of an Alcibiades; at Ephesus we rivalled Salamis’).

<sup>126</sup> Plut. *Cat. Ma.* 13.1 τὴν δὲ Περσικὴν ἐκείνην περιήλυσιν καὶ κύκλωσιν ὁ Κάτων εἰς νοῦν βαλόμενος ἐξώδευσε νύκτωρ, ἀναλαβὼν μέρος τι τῆς στρατιᾶς (‘but Cato, calling to mind the famous compass and circuit of the pass which the Persians had once made, took a considerable force and set out under cover of darkness’). On the relationship between this episode and Cato *Orig.* fr. 76 Cornell see Calboli (1996) 11–12.

<sup>127</sup> Walbank (1943) 9 n. 9.

<sup>128</sup> On which see Swain (1996) 145–50.

the counsellors of the king, who cast the imperialist Romans instead in the role of the Persians and Antiochus in the role of Sparta.<sup>129</sup> It was the transferable nature of the barbarian paradigm that gave it a paradoxical potential. As Emma Dench puts it with regard to a now lost Paestan tomb that apparently cast the Greeks as barbarians, ‘the paradox was that it was not necessary for a community to identify itself, or to be identified, as Greek in order to appropriate this particular way of expressing superiority’.<sup>130</sup> This is what seems to happen at Rome, certainly in the Augustan age and probably in the middle Republic, when we find anti-barbarian or anti-Persian propaganda applied to Rome’s military enemies in paradoxical combination with the Romans’ self-fashioning as latter-day Trojans. As a corollary of this, when the Romans wish to react against the preponderance of Hellenic culture, they cannot do it except from within that very culture, so that they end up applying the same Panhellenic anti-barbarian language to the Greeks themselves, charging *them* with the orientalising characteristics of the Persians, effeminacy and lasciviousness.<sup>131</sup>

The transferability of anti-barbarian language in the third and second centuries is precisely what made it applicable to the Carthaginians, all the more so since the eastern origin of the Punics/Phoenicians from Tyre was well known (Ennius, *Ann. fr.* 472 Sk. *Poenos Sarra oriundos*).<sup>132</sup> Moreover, as already anticipated, the equation between the Persian barbarians and the Carthaginians is well attested in the Greek tradition, particularly in the West. While there is also evidence that the Greeks regarded Carthage as an exemplary polis,<sup>133</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Livy 37.17.7 (with reference to the Romans’ demands towards Smyrna and Lampsacus) *sed initium semper a parvis iniusta imperandi fieri, nisi crederent Persas, cum aquam terramque ab Lacedaemoniis petierint, gleba terrae et haustu aquae eguisse. Per similem temptationem a Romanis de duabus ciuitatibus agi* (‘but always the beginnings of tyrannical rule were small, unless one believed that the Persians, when they demanded water and earth from the Spartans, actually needed a clod of soil or a sip of water. A like experiment the Romans were attempting in the case of the two cities’).

<sup>130</sup> Dench (2003) 300, on the tomb see n. 113.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Spawforth (2012) 21.

<sup>132</sup> On Sarra as an old name for Tyre (possibly from the Hebrew name *Tzor*) see Skutsch (1985) 631–2.

<sup>133</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1272b–1273b, Eratosth. *ap. Str.* 1.4.9, *Pol.* 6.51.

the parallel between Persians and Carthaginians dates back to the fifth century, with the artificial synchronisation of the battles of Himera and Salamis (or Thermopylae) on the very same day in 480 BCE.<sup>134</sup> This assimilation is especially attested in Sicily, where it served the primary purpose of legitimising the Sicilian tyrants as defenders of the Hellenes. In Pindar's first Pythian Ode (written to commemorate a chariot victory of Hieron of Syracuse in 474–470 BCE) not only is the parallelism between the battles of Himera and Cuma on one side and Salamis and Plataea on the other explicit (Pind. *Pyth.* 1.71–81),<sup>135</sup> but Carthaginians, Etruscans and Persians are all tied to each other through assimilation to the monstrous and chaos-threatening 'hundred-headed Typhoeus' (*Pyth.* 1.16 Τυφῶς ἑκατοντακάρανος), eventually subjugated by the just and divine order of Zeus. In addition to this, in 472 BCE Hieron apparently had Aeschylus' *Persae* performed at Aetna,<sup>136</sup> while the massive temple of Olympian Zeus at Agrigento, which displayed iconographic themes of fifth-century Athenian anti-Persian propaganda, a Gigantomachy in the east pediment and a capture of Troy in the west,<sup>137</sup> must be dated to the same period and connected to post-Himera celebrations, thus portraying the Carthaginians as the Persians of the West.<sup>138</sup>

The so-called Olympieion of Agrigento is connected to the only possible representation of Carthaginians as Giants in early Latin literature, namely the fragment from Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* appropriately dubbed by Marino Barchiesi 'the enigma of the Giants':<sup>139</sup>

<sup>134</sup> Hdt. 7.166; Arist. *Poet.* ch. 23.1459a24 (Salamis); Diod. 11.24.1 (Thermopylae). On the possibility that Timaeus must be held responsible for the synchronism with Thermopylae in order to demonstrate the superiority of western Greece see Feeney (2007) 51 with bibliography.

<sup>135</sup> See T. Harrison (2000) 61–3, Prag (2010) 55–6.

<sup>136</sup> *TGF* III T 56a (Eratosth. fr. 109 Strecker) and T 1.9–11, 18 (*Aesch.* *vita* 9–11, 18); see Prag (2010) 56–7.

<sup>137</sup> Diod. 13.82.4.

<sup>138</sup> On the temple see Marconi (1929) 57–66, Mertens (2006) 261–6 and Consoli (2008), who suggests that the so-called Temple of Victory at Himera, built at Carthage's expense after the battle, also had a Gigantomachy with Hercules represented on the pediment.

<sup>139</sup> The translation is taken from Fowler (1996), an important study of the relationship between Carthage and Rome through ecphrasis from Naevius to Silius.

## Barbarian Carthaginians?

inerant signa expressa, quomodo Titani,  
bicipites Gigantes magnique Atlantes,  
Runcus atque Purpureus, filii Terras

(Naevius fr. 4 Str.)

There were included fashioned representations, of how the Titans, twin-bodied Giants, and the great Atlantes, Runcus and Purpureus, sons of the Earth

The fragment, which is clearly part of an ecphrasis, probably of relief sculpture,<sup>140</sup> has been thought by Hermann Fraenkel and Wladislaw Strzelecki among others to refer to the Olympieion.<sup>141</sup> Naevius would have started the poem with the narration of the events of the First Punic War, as a fragment transmitted by Charisius testifies,<sup>142</sup> at least up to the siege of Agrigentum, where he would have inserted a description of the magnificent temple, with a Hellenistic ecphrasis of the scenes therein included, not only the Gigantomachy, but also the capture of Troy illustrated in the west pediment. According to this reconstruction, two fragments transmitted by Servius Danielis on Naevius' *Iliupersis*<sup>143</sup> would belong to this second part of the ecphrasis. The poet would have inserted the long digression on the flight of Aeneas, thus transforming the ecphrasis

I follow the text of Strzelecki (1964) because I tentatively accept his reconstruction of the poem.

<sup>140</sup> *Expressa* has been felt to convey the sense of a sculpture relief, as in Tac. *Hist.* 3.74.1 *aram ... posuit casus suos in marmore expressam* ('he built an altar on which his own adventures were represented in marble'), even though M. Barchiesi (1962) 276 refers to TLL V2.1788 to prove that the verb can also refer to painting. However, none of the examples there given comes from early Latin literature, where *exprimo* seems rather to refer to the act of 'pressing' something (see TLL V2.1787, e.g. Plaut. *Pseud.* 56 *expressam in cera ex anulo ... imaginem*, 'the picture pressed into wax from his ring').

<sup>141</sup> The reconstruction was first suggested by Bergk (1842), who not only identified the fragment with the temple of Agrigentum, but also added the scholia of DServius *ad A.* 2.797 and 3.10 (frr. 6 and 5 Str.) as part of the ecphrasis of that very same temple. The same suggestion was made famous by Strzelecki (1964) who, with apparently no knowledge of Bergk, was inspired by H. Fraenkel (1935). See E. Fraenkel (1954).

<sup>142</sup> Fr. 3 Str., which refers to Manius Valerius' expedition to Sicily in 263 BCE and was ascribed by Charisius to the first book of the *Bellum Poenicum*; see Chapter 4.3, p. 222.

<sup>143</sup> DServius *ad A.* 3.10 = fr. 5 Str. and DServius *ad A.* 2.797 = fr. 6 Str.; see Chapter 4.3, p. 223.

into the so-called ‘archaeology’ of the poem. We will return in [Chapter 4](#) to the consequences that such reconstruction bears for Virgil’s *Aeneid*, but it suffices to say here that if we accept the attractive hypothesis that Naevius’ fragment is indeed part of an ecphrasis of the Olympieion’s Gigantomachy, then it would have the effect of freezing the narrative of the First Punic War with a metaphorical representation of the western Greeks’ fight against the Carthaginians, conceived as an identical double for the momentous struggle between Greece and Persia, and proleptic of the Romans’ imminent and unavoidable success against their own barbarians. If so, the Hellenistic representations of the fight against barbarians that we have witnessed in the literature and iconography of the Augustan age would find an earlier parallel precisely in that early Latin epos that many scholars have supposed to be in tune with Hellenistic literature, up to a certain point,<sup>144</sup> and indeed it is no surprise that Naevius’ fragment of the Giants has also received its own analysis in the light of Hellenistic ecphrastic aesthetics.<sup>145</sup> Even though one must be careful to employ an argument that easily runs the risk of falling into a vicious circle (and it is true that there are good reasons to put under scrutiny the very existence of Hellenistic historical epos, posited by Konrat Ziegler partly on the retrospective evidence of early Latin historical epos),<sup>146</sup> it is nevertheless a reasonable guess to suppose that Naevius

<sup>144</sup> As a note of warning, to stress that Naevius and Ennius were ‘Hellenistic’, in the sense that they certainly read and used Hellenistic literature, is not the same as claiming that they ascribed to ‘Callimachean aesthetics’, for the conception and construction of which we may be overdependent on Latin poetry from the *neoteroi* onwards, and especially on the Augustans, who claim to follow it in explicit antagonism to Republican epos. This does not rule out the possibility that Naevius and Ennius may have read and used Callimachus, and that their ‘un-Callimachean’ traits may have been exaggerated by the Augustans, but they may have not conceptualised Callimacheanism in the same aesthetic mode as the Augustans. On the Hellenistic nature of early Latin epos see Marmorale (1950), Mariotti (1955), Gratwick (1982a), Luck (1983), A. Barchiesi (1995), Kerkhecker (2001), Farrell (2005) and Clauss (2010). For a somewhat exaggerated critique of the scholarly tendency to ascribe Virgil’s Alexandrianism to Naevius and Ennius see Goldberg (1995) 28–57. On the debate over Ennius see also Rossi-Breed (2006) 415–18 and Goldschmidt (2013) 14–15.

<sup>145</sup> Faber (2012).

<sup>146</sup> The very existence of Hellenistic historical epos, ‘discovered’ by Ziegler (1966), has been doubted by Cameron (1995) 263–302, but see its defence in Barbantani (2001) 3–31 and Kerkhecker (2001).

and Ennius had been influenced by Hellenistic anti-barbarian encomiastic literature, and perhaps also by Hellenistic historical epics, if they existed, that immortalised the battles against barbarians following the *Persika* of Choerilus of Samos, such as the poem composed by Simonides of Magnesia in celebration of Antiochus I's elephant battle against the Galatians of around 270 BCE.<sup>147</sup>

Problematic as the matter is, Naevius' fragment testifies to the existence of at least one example of ecphrastic Gigantomachy in the first historical epic poem ever produced at Rome. Unsurprisingly, many scholars have been tempted to interpret it in the light of what we know of Gigantomachies from Hellenistic and Augustan sources: not simply as an allegory of the fight against the Carthaginian barbarians,<sup>148</sup> but more generally as anticipating the eventual triumph of Jupiter over irrationality and chaos in the *Bellum Punicum*, just as in Virgil's *Aeneid*.<sup>149</sup> While this may be a plausible interpretation of Naevius' Gigantomachy, it also seems reasonable to accept Denis Feeney's suggestion that Ennius' *Annales* is the common model behind Lucretius and Livy when they present the Second Punic War as a 'contest for world dominion' in terms which are especially close to the presentation of the Persian Wars.<sup>150</sup> I refer here to those lines of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* in which the arrival of Hannibal's Carthaginians is represented in apocalyptic terms and employed in the argument against fear of death 'as a means of imagining annihilation or nonbeing':<sup>151</sup>

<sup>147</sup> On Choerilus, possibly the founder of the 'genre' in around 400 BCE, see Radici Colace (1979) and Hainsworth (1991) 60–4. On Simonides of Magnesia (whose poem may have been written under Antiochus III), see Ceccarelli (2008) with bibliography.

<sup>148</sup> According to Dufallo (2013) 18 n. 13, Carthaginians may be alluded to via evocation of the purple dye in the name of the giant Purpureus (normally identified with Πορφυρίων, king of the Giants, as in Pind. *Pyth.* 8.12).

<sup>149</sup> On Titanomachy as an example of irrationality and impiety in early Latin literature see Plautus *Pers.* 26–7 *quid ego faciam? disne auorser? | quasi Titani cum eis belligerem | quibus sat esse non queam?*, 'What should I do? Should I resist the gods? Should I, like the Titans, wage war against those whose equal I couldn't be?'

<sup>150</sup> Feeney (1984) 181, with reference to Lucr. 3.833–7 and Liv. 29.17.6 and 30.32.1–2.

<sup>151</sup> O'Gorman (2004) 101. Lucretius' text and translations are taken from W. H. D. Rouse's Loeb unless otherwise indicated.



## Carthaginian Constructions

et uelut anteacto nil tempore sensimus aegri,  
ad configendum uenientibus undique Poenis,  
omnia cum belli trepido concussa tumultu  
horrida contremuere sub altis aetheris oris  
in dubioque fuere utrorum ad regna cadendum  
omnibus humanis esset terraeque marique ...

(Lucr. 3.832–7)

And as in time past we felt no distress, while from all quarters  
the Carthaginians were coming to the conflict, when the whole  
world, shaken by the terrifying tumult of war, shivered and quaked  
under the lofty and breezy heaven, and was in doubt under which  
domination all men were destined to fall by land and sea ...

Since Lucr. 3.835 is a clear Ennian echo (although Ennius seems to have used it in reverse, to describe Scipio's arrival in Libya, *Ann.* 309 Sk. *Africa terribili tremit horrida terra tumultu*, 'Africa, that wild land, is shaken by such terrifying tumult'),<sup>152</sup> it is attractive to entertain the possibility that this idea of the Punic Wars as a clash of continents, also found in Virgil's *Aeneid*,<sup>153</sup> was originally in the *Annales*, and perhaps also in Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*. Another fragment of the *Annales* (*Ann.* fr. 302 Sk. *Europam Libyamque rapax ubi diuidit unda*, 'where the rapacious waves divide Europe from Libya'), echoed by Horace in his third Roman Ode,<sup>154</sup> puts Europe face to face with Libya in a way which seems to anticipate the continental opposition between Carthage and Rome found at the beginning of the *Aeneid*.<sup>155</sup> Ennius' Libya apparently usurps the role of Europe's antagonist which we would normally expect to be played by Asia, all the more so since Ennius expresses the opposition between the two in exactly the same geographical terms used to convey the contrast between Europe and Asia, facing each other from the opposite shores

<sup>152</sup> On this fragment, and the allocutional variant *tremis*, see Degl'Innocenti Pierini (2013) 116–21.

<sup>153</sup> See Chapter 2.2.1, p. 99.

<sup>154</sup> Hor. *Carm.* 3.3.46–7 *qua medius liquor | secernit Europen ab Afro* ('where the mid-sea divides Europe from the African'), with reference to the Strait of Gibraltar, see Nisbet–Rudd (2004) 48–9.

<sup>155</sup> *A.* 1.13, see above, p. 47 and Chapter 2.2.1 n. 42.

of the Hellespont.<sup>156</sup> As the author of the *Culex* will not fail to notice when alluding to Lucr. 3.383 (*Culex* 35 *Graecia cum timuit uenientis undique Persas*, ‘when Greece feared the Persians, coming from all quarters’), the Ennian imagery conveyed in these Lucretian lines is none other than that of the Hellenic fight against the Persian barbarians.

### 1.4 The Enemy on Stage

If it has appeared so far reasonable to suppose that Naevius and Ennius represented the fight against the Carthaginians in their epic poems in cultural continuity with the fifth-century Athenian model of the fight against the Persian barbarians, and therefore in a recognisably Hellenistic fashion, one is left to wonder whether similar interests in themes of alterity and otherness would have been conveyed in their tragedies, which were staged for the community precisely while Rome was in the grip of the conflict against Carthage. Unfortunately, given the loss of the relevant literature and the prevalently mythological setting of the tragedies, we are in no position to claim with any certainty that these spectacles had anything to do with the Punic conflict. However, recognition of the frequent staging of those Greek plays that dealt with the Athenian ‘invention of the barbarian’, together with a consideration of the historical and cultural context of the Latin productions, may allow us to speculate on the role played by Carthage in the birth and development of a literature in the Latin language.

If we are allowed to use Phrynichus’ anecdote as a point of comparison, it may be that, as Ingo Gildenhard has recently argued, we should interpret the apparent preponderance of *fabulae cothurnatae* at Rome over *fabulae praetextae* as an indication of the Romans’ preference for avoiding politically controversial themes.<sup>157</sup> However, just as at Athens, this does not mean that mythological tragedies could not convey political messages relevant to the community as a whole, all the more

<sup>156</sup> See Aesch. *Pers.* 66 in [Chapter 2.2.1](#), p. 99.

<sup>157</sup> Gildenhard (2010) 157–8.

so since these plays were actively adapted to the interests and needs of a Roman audience, rather than passively translated from their Greek originals.<sup>158</sup> On the contrary, by comparison with historical dramas, mythological dramas may have looked like a more suitable medium for propagating subtle messages recognisable by all those who shared a specific set of values that constituted the bones of the cultural and political framework of the community at Rome.<sup>159</sup> Clearly this argument is only convincing if one simultaneously accepts the existence of such a framework, namely of some form of Roman collective identity that cut across different strata of the community already in the second half of the third century BCE, the conception of which can and should be integrated with more complex models that analyse the role played by people outside of Rome, or by competitive aristocratic families within Rome, for Rome's identity formation and construction.<sup>160</sup> Although the argument may run the risk of circularity, it is the very existence of a theatrical community that shared, or at any rate recognised, the cultural and political values conveyed by the plays that should alert us to the collective nature of such values: since theatre must have been, as Gildenhard himself concedes, 'a public arena of interaction between the elite (or members thereof) and the wider populace', it goes without saying that these different communities at Rome must have spoken the same cultural language in order to allow such interaction in an '*occasion* and ... *context* [that] remained politically charged'.<sup>161</sup> The staging of *fabulae praetextae* has been

<sup>158</sup> See Flower (2000) 29 on how 'such messages could appear in a more allegorical or metaphorical guise'. On the Romans' originality in translating Greek literature the seminal work is Traina (1970), but see now Feeney (2016) 45–64 with caution, especially in the light of the reviews by Wiseman (2016), Zetzel (2016).

<sup>159</sup> See Eigler (2000) and *contra* Gildenhard (2010) 158: 'the political dimension of Greek mythological tragedy arguably went little beyond exploring in somewhat vague terms the place of Rome within the wider Mediterranean *oikoumene*'.

<sup>160</sup> On the first approach see especially Dench (2005) and Wallace-Hadrill (2008), on the second Flower (1996), all studies that go beyond the model of Rome's national identity posited by Gruen (1992).

<sup>161</sup> Gildenhard (2010) 157–8. Cf. his critique, at 159, of 'the striking tendency to ascribe key collective agency to an elite group, or indeed, state apparatus that had its center in the senate and is believed to have pursued a deliberate policy of cultural enhancement or cohesion', especially directed to Gruen (1990), Feeney

interpreted by most scholars, I suspect correctly, as celebration of Rome's 'national' affairs at a collective level.<sup>162</sup> Although this model has been challenged by Gildenhard's hypothesis that the *praetextae* were not meant to stage the military accomplishments of individual generals as victories of the entire community, but were rather an instrument of aristocratic self-promotion,<sup>163</sup> their very existence testifies to the simultaneous existence of a community by which such accomplishments had to be ratified, which means that they had to be recognised as 'Roman' according to the specific standards of the collectivity. While it is true that this cultural and political framework must have been ever-shifting, constantly under construction with each and every new play,<sup>164</sup> it is also true that there must have been a collective frame of reference within which such cultural changes could be instantiated and promoted. According to this model, theatre must have played a key role in the creation,

(1998) and Habinek (1998). Gildenhard's model proposes instead 'aristocratic competition and self-promotion' as a possible key factor for the introduction and promotion of Greek plays at Rome. While this model, as he himself admits, also lacks evidence, it is not incompatible with the research for a cultural and political rationale in the choice of mythological and historical themes that would be of collective interest to the theatrical community of Rome. On dramas as vehicles for the construction and reassertion of Roman identity see Gruen (1992) 183–222 and Cowan (2010a) 39; Citroni (1995) 31–56 speaks of both mid-Republican epos and drama as 'letteratura nazionale'.

<sup>162</sup> Zorzetti (1980), Gruen (1990) 79–123, Wiseman (1994) 1–22, Goldberg (1995) 32–3 and (1996) 273, Dangel (2001), Manuwald (2001) 99–110 and (2011) 142, Boyle (2006) 10, but see *contra* Gildenhard (2010), only partly following Flower (1995), who emphasises the aspect of aristocratic self-promotion but without denying that individual leaders' accomplishments are presented as *res gestae* of the Roman people. Flower's attempt at reconstructing the religious and political context of *praetextae* while minimising their Greek influence follows and corrects Zorzetti (1980) (to be consulted with the criticisms of Jocelyn (1983)) and is a heated reply to Wiseman (1994) 1–22 (cf. (1998) 1–16), who assumes that drama based on Roman historical themes must have been much more popular than the evidence suggests. Against Flower's criticisms of the view that *praetextae* were similar to tragedies see now Kragelund (2002) and (2016). For an edition and commentary of the fragments, with cautious presentation of the evidence in discussing the main issues, see Manuwald (2001).

<sup>163</sup> Gildenhard (2010) 157. Gildenhard (2003) opens a similar debate for Ennius' *Annales*, prioritising ruling elites at the expense of the community as the object of the poem's celebration within a client–patron system that would involve material compensation in return for the poet's efforts; on the debate over the partisan or national nature of Ennius' epic see Rossi-Breed (2006) 402–8 with bibliography.

<sup>164</sup> On cultural products as being both confirmation of and challenges to community values see Mitchell (2007) 4–5 with bibliography.

contestation and propagation of political and ideological messages which could spread across different in-groups, throughout what could be recognised as the collectivity of the entire city. Indeed, the long-successful resistance of the Romans to moves to construct a permanent theatre<sup>165</sup> attests their perception of it as a powerful and potentially dangerous place for the spreading of ideas through massed gatherings, while it reads at the same time as ‘an attempt at preserving traditional civic and religious customs as well as cult rites’.<sup>166</sup> It may be that the Romans regarded the construction of such a structure, which would have prevented the holding of *ludi scaenici* in front of the temples, as a potential tool with which to invalidate the strong link between performances and religious festivals<sup>167</sup> and simultaneously to spread political messages throughout the population. If there can still be doubt about the political significance of early Latin drama, it is instead certain that theatre was considered a particularly apt setting for the spreading of political ideas from Cicero’s times onwards,<sup>168</sup> and when Pompey finally built the first stone theatre complex in 55 BCE, the overtly religious, national and political significance of this “private” public monument<sup>169</sup> was absolutely clear.

Debate about the political valency of early Latin theatre, focusing primarily on the influence of Roman aristocratic elites in the production of plays, has long left out the different issue of its connection to foreign politics and military affairs. Surprising as it must sound, Otto Skutsch in 1970 could claim with enough confidence that there seems to be nothing warlike

<sup>165</sup> The reasons for this policy are variously debated: see Gruen (1992) 205–22, Boyle (2006) 22–3 and Manuwald (2011) 59–61.

<sup>166</sup> Manuwald (2011) 61.

<sup>167</sup> A link further attested by the figure of the theatre-temple from the early times of the Republic up to the Augustan age: see Hanson (1959). On the theatre-temple of Virgil’s *Georgics* 3 see Giusti (forthcoming).

<sup>168</sup> See Cic. *Sest.* 106 *etenim tribus locis significari maxime de re publica populi Romani iudicium ac uoluntas potest, contione, comitiis, ludorum gladiatorumque consessu* (‘for the opinion and feeling of the Roman people in public affairs can be most clearly expressed on three occasions, at a meeting, at an assembly, at a gathering for plays and gladiatorial shows’); cf. 115 and 118–23. On the possibility of interpreting mid-Republican theatre retrospectively from the late Republic see Dangel (2001).

<sup>169</sup> Zanker (1988) 24.

about the plays of Livius Andronicus and Naevius,<sup>170</sup> even though the latter is known to have written a series of *praetextae*, the most famous of them the *Clastidium*, in celebration of Marcus Claudius Marcellus' victory over the Insubres in 222 BCE.<sup>171</sup> This view has recently been challenged by Jarrett Welsh, who points out that later sources, including Livy in particular, show recognition of a close nexus between war and scenic performances, whatever their content.<sup>172</sup> This argument is much indebted to studies such as those of Thomas Habinek<sup>173</sup> or, more recently, Matthew Leigh,<sup>174</sup> whose aim was to liberate Latin literature from the common view that it developed from closer encounters with Greece, and emphasise instead the role of the Punic Wars and Rome's transformation into a military empire. The development of Latin theatre and epic must therefore be reckoned with as a process tightly intertwined both with the spreading of 'Hellenism' far beyond a racial exclusivity,<sup>175</sup> and with Rome's involvement in the Punic Wars and its consequent expansion in the Mediterranean. As Denis Feeney's recent monograph in particular makes clear,<sup>176</sup> it can hardly be considered a coincidence that the first Latin *fabula* was produced for the *ludi Romani* in the year after the end of the First Punic War (240 BCE) by Livius Andronicus,<sup>177</sup> the same poet who would later be chosen to compose the propitiatory hymn to Juno Regina in the year of the battle of

<sup>170</sup> Skutsch (1970) 120.

<sup>171</sup> See Flower (1995) 183–4.

<sup>172</sup> Welsh (2011) 45.

<sup>173</sup> Habinek (1998).

<sup>174</sup> Leigh (2004) and (2010).

<sup>175</sup> See Manuwald (2011) 16, 35–6. It must be added that the Greek theatrical profession became Panhellenic only after Menander's death, in 292 BCE: see Gratwick (1982b) 77–80.

<sup>176</sup> Feeney (2016) *passim*.

<sup>177</sup> According to Cicero, *Brut.* 72–3 (see also *De Sen.* 50; *Tusc. Disp.* 1.3), who nonetheless also mentions that Accius said that Livius' career as a dramatist began only in 197 BCE, a chronology usually rejected by modern scholarship. For a new interpretation of the origin of Accius' error, see Welsh (2011). On the passage, Manuwald (2011) 34, 43, 188–9, Mattingly (1993), Paratore (1957) 51–2 and 60–1 on the hymn to Juno, Gratwick (1982b) 78, Schiesaro (2005b) 269. Note also that the *ludi Florales*, in honour of the goddess Flora, whose temple was built in 241 BCE, started in 238 BCE (Vell. Pat. 1.14.8; Pl. *HN* 18.286).

the Metaurus (207 BCE).<sup>178</sup> This *fabula*, like the *ludi* of 240 in general, must have been meant ‘to celebrate a pivotal stage in the transformation of Rome into an international power’,<sup>179</sup> whereas the hymn of 207 offered the stimulus for the official establishment of a literary guild of *scribae* and *histriones* in the Aventine temple of Minerva.<sup>180</sup> Nor can it possibly be a coincidence that the Hannibalic War and its successful conclusion saw a striking multiplication and increase in length of public festivals and their attendant *ludi scaenici*, occasions to confirm, in Gesine Manuwald’s words, ‘Rome’s national identity as well as its cultural competence and political unity’.<sup>181</sup> During this period, new *ludi* were created and old ones were extended. In 214 BCE the *ludi scaenici* of the *ludi Romani* were extended to four days; 212 BCE saw the birth of the *ludi Apollinares*, which included *ludi scaenici* from the beginning; in 204 BCE the *ludi Megalenses* started, with *ludi scaenici* introduced in 194 BCE, and *ludi Ceriales* are attested for 202/201 BCE (although they were probably introduced around 220/219 BCE); the *ludi plebei* were probably held from 220 BCE, but the introduction of *ludi scaenici* came only in 200 BCE.<sup>182</sup> This is the context against which we should interpret Porcius Licinus’ famously controversial fragment<sup>183</sup> in which the first Roman Muse is described as emerging ‘warlike’ from the Hannibalic War:<sup>184</sup>

Poenico bello secundo Musa pinnato gradu  
intulit se bellicosam in Romuli gentem feram.

(Porcius fr. 1 Courtney = Gell. *Noct.* 17.21.44)

<sup>178</sup> Liv. 27.37.

<sup>179</sup> Schiesaro (2005b) 271, referring to the *ludi* of 240. Cf. also Cowan (2010a) 39: ‘It is significant that the first tragedy celebrated a victory (albeit over Carthage), since the appropriation of Greek tragedy was an act of cultural conquest, as Roman actors marched into and occupied the stage of Attic drama.’

<sup>180</sup> Festus 446.26–448.4 Lindsay; see Gruen (1990) 85–91, Habinek (1998) 37 and Welsh (2011) 35–6. The importance of this hymn as handed down by our sources does not mean that we should think of this choral performance as an isolated phenomenon, see Zorzetti (1991) 317–18.

<sup>181</sup> Manuwald (2011) 48. Cf. Gruen (1990) 84; Boyle (2006) 15–16.

<sup>182</sup> See Paratore (1957) 51–5, Manuwald (2011) 41–9.

<sup>183</sup> See Courtney (2003) 83–6.

<sup>184</sup> See Skutsch (1970) for a persuasive defence of *bellicosam* qualifying *Musa* rather than *gentem*; Whitmarsh (2001) 9 reads the syntactical ambiguity as deliberate.

## The Enemy on Stage

It was during the Second Punic War that the Muse, on her winged feet, brought herself warlike among the wild people of Romulus.

While scholars are divided as to whether Porcius' Muse refers to Naevius,<sup>185</sup> Ennius<sup>186</sup> or Livius Andronicus,<sup>187</sup> the key point is that a clear connection is established between the Second Punic War and the birth of Latin Literature, whose Pindaric<sup>188</sup> but warlike Muse clearly highlights Rome's twofold process of assimilation to but differentiation from Greek culture. Porcius' fragment perfectly captures the distinct but simultaneous role that Greece and Carthage played in the formation of a literature which developed in imitation of Greek culture under the stimulus of the First and Second Punic Wars.

Within this historical and cultural context, it is plausible to suppose that the tragedies of the third and early second centuries at Rome were somehow influenced by, and possibly alluded to, the contemporary conflict against Carthage.<sup>189</sup> Just as it has often been argued, albeit problematically, that the popularity of the Trojan saga on the Roman stage must be connected to the Trojan origin of the Romans,<sup>190</sup> we can speculate on whether the striking interest in themes of barbarism and otherness could be connected to the Romans'

<sup>185</sup> Mattingly (1993), Courtney (2003) 84.

<sup>186</sup> Skutsch (1970), Habinek (1998) 38–9.

<sup>187</sup> Welsh (2011).

<sup>188</sup> Cf. *pinnato gradu* and Pindar's *Isth.* 1.64 *περὺν ἔσσιν ... ἀγλααῖς Πιερίδων* with Courtney (2003) 83 and Welsh (2011) 46.

<sup>189</sup> See Skutsch (1968) 174–5 (with Winiarczyk (2013) 111 n. 12) for the suggestion that Ennius' *Andromacha* alluded to Scipio's capture of Carthago Nova; or Lefèvre (2000) on possible allusions to the Saguntum episode in Naevius' *Danae*. Jeppesen (2016) 130–1 suggests some sort of relationship between episodes of the Second Punic War, such as the capture of Capua and Carthago Nova, and the laments over the fall of cities present in Naevius, Ennius and Plautus.

<sup>190</sup> See especially Lefèvre (1978a), and *contra* Gildenhard (2010) 160–4. Jocelyn (2000) 336–7, together with E. Weber (2000), urges to caution in emphasising the Romans' interest in Trojan tragedies, given that Attic theatre provides 'an equal liking for plays about Troy' but concludes that 'it is ... not to be denied that any play touching on Aeneas ... would have provided good opportunities for a Latin poet to bolster the image Romans had of themselves and to support their desire to assert a link with the heroes of Greek cult and poetry while at the same time setting at a distance their principal contemporary enemies, the Gauls, the Carthaginians, and certain of the Greeks'. On the contested Trojan descent of the Romans before the Augustan age see n. 30. For other examples of the 'ideological reception of the historicisation of myth' present in Republican tragedy see Dangel (2001).



efforts to explore questions of identity and alterity while they were under threat from the Carthaginians and simultaneously struggling to define their identity within, and in relation to, Greek cultural standards.<sup>191</sup> We will see in [Chapter 2](#) how Euripides' *Medea* and Euripides' *Bacchae*, filtered through their Latin adaptations, were felt by Virgil to be the most appropriate tragic models for the construction of his Carthage in the *Aeneid*. It may not be a coincidence that these two topics, together with the Trojan saga, seem also to have been among the most popular on the Roman tragic stage. Among the tragedies that touched on Bacchic themes, we find (possibly) Livius Andronicus' *Ino* and *Antiopa*, Naevius' *Lycurgus*, Ennius' *Athamas* and later Pacuvius' *Pentheus*, *Antiopa* and *Periboea* and Accius' *Stasiastael Tropaeum Liberi*, *Bacchae* and *Athamas*,<sup>192</sup> while *Medea* was exploited both in her Euripidean form (Ennius' *Medea exul*), in the Apollonian version (Accius' *Medea siue Argonautae*) and most interestingly in her specific role of ancestor of the Persians (Pacuvius' *Medus* and perhaps another *Medea* by Ennius).<sup>193</sup> Moreover, Thrace also played a major role, as in Livius Andronicus', Pacuvius' and Accius' *Tereus*. As already suggested, such an investment in barbarian themes may reflect the necessity of gathering the community together against unspecified barbarians at the same time as the Romans were actually threatened by the Carthaginians: just as in Athens, the same plays that had 'invented the barbarians' may have put into effect a common feeling of *metus hostilis* among the community which would further engender collective, 'national' cohesion. Moreover, whereas the *cothurnatae* seem to align with those Greek tragedies that already treated barbaric themes under a mythological disguise, Greek historical

<sup>191</sup> The view that Republican theatre's fascination with identity and otherness reflects the Romans' efforts in constructing and defining their identity informs many of the papers in Manuwald (ed.) (2000).

<sup>192</sup> On how these plays may have interacted with their cultural and political contexts see Flower (2000) with bibliography.

<sup>193</sup> On the Romans' fascination with *Medea* as 'the Other's Other', the Greeks' symbol for otherness *par excellence*, see Vogt-Spira (2000) and Cowan (2010a); on *Medea* as a model for Virgil's Dido, see [Chapter 2.3](#); on the question of whether Ennius wrote one or two *Medeas* see the bibliography in Manuwald (2012) 187–8.

drama, and Aeschylus' *Persae* in particular, may have seemed a more suitable model for Latin *praetextae*. It is plausible to suppose that the Punic Wars would have surfaced in the *praetextae*, even though our only evidence for it depends on whether or not Ennius' *Scipio* should be identified as a *praetexta* in the first place.<sup>194</sup> In this genre, the influence of Aeschylus' *Persae* has often been posited by scholars, who have seen it as a model for Pacuvius' *Paulus*,<sup>195</sup> Ennius' *Ambracia*<sup>196</sup> and especially Accius' *Brutus*,<sup>197</sup> where Accius would have drawn on Atossa's dream in the *Persae* for his scene of the dream of Tarquin, thus assimilating the two characters as 'cultural "others" from the point of view of the Greeks and Romans ... both prescient of their defeats by a superior opponent'.<sup>198</sup>

These connections between barbarian themes on stage and the Carthaginians at the gates, even if accepted, must not be thought of as some kind of straightforward equation. I am not suggesting that the Roman audience, or a portion thereof, would have necessarily assimilated the Carthaginians who were threatening Rome to the Colchians or Thebans on stage. Rather, what interests me in terms of identity formation is the ideological influence subconsciously exerted on that portion of citizens gathered to watch an entertaining spectacle of what the 'other', the 'barbarian', was supposed to look and act like, given that the recognition of Rome's 'other' (or 'shadow self') on stage in Republican tragedy is the first step towards the acceptance of the existence of such an indeterminate concept

<sup>194</sup> The view that the *Scipio* was a *praetexta* rather than a panegyric or epic poem for the Africanus has been revisited by A. Russo (2007) 199–210, followed by Morelli (2016). Its curious polymetry has led many to suppose that it was a work included in Ennius' *Saturae*: see Manuwald (2001) 173 n. 113 and Winiarczyk (2013) 112–14 for further bibliography. On the very late notice of a *praetexta* entitled *Africanus*, given by Rabanus Maurus (783–856 CE), see Manuwald (2001) 89.

<sup>195</sup> Tandoi (1985); see Manuwald (2001) 194 and Schierl (2006) 515–28.

<sup>196</sup> Erasmo (2004) 71–3.

<sup>197</sup> Jocelyn (2000) 345 and Erasmo (2004) 59–63; both Atossa and Tarquin relate the dreams to a character on stage (the choryphaeus, the *uates*) for interpretation, and both dreams are followed by a second omen which anticipates defeat; in addition, Tarquin's dream of the two rams may be reminiscent of Atossa's two horse-women. The intertexts proposed by Erasmo are accepted by Cowan (2013) 341 despite his justified criticisms of the book, Cowan (2005).

<sup>198</sup> Erasmo (2004) 63.

as Rome's collective 'self' among the audience. In recent years, more than one scholar has noticed that the choices made in what Feeney dubs 'the Roman translation project'<sup>199</sup> allow us to single out the themes that would have seemed most relevant to the community as a whole. For instance, scholars have emphasised how the First Punic War and Rome's maritime expansion in the Mediterranean are reflected in Livius Andronicus' choice of translating the *Odyssey* rather than the *Iliad*.<sup>200</sup> Similarly, the beginning of Ennius' *Medea exul*, where Ennius turns Euripides' 'pine-wood' Argo into a 'fir-wood' Argo, suggesting the context of a military expedition,<sup>201</sup> has been read by many in either optimistic or ominous terms as alluding to Rome's expanding maritime and military actions.<sup>202</sup> In the same way, the fascination with Trojans and barbarians expressed in the tragedies can be read in terms of a simultaneous obsession regarding the instability of what was to be considered purely Roman in the third and second centuries BCE. Such instability relates to Rome's conflicting relationship with Greek culture, wavering between emulation and rivalry, and to the difficulties in uniting the acceptance of a Phrygian, barbarian label for Rome while simultaneously fashioning her fight against eastern enemies (and possibly Carthaginians) according to Hellenistic anti-barbarian discourse. If this interpretation is correct, then we should not be surprised to discover that the same ambiguity surrounding the barbarian paradigm that we have noted in the Augustan sources has been proposed for the mid-Republican sources as well, and that those few examples of barbarians in early Latin literature that we have already surveyed have also been interpreted as referring

<sup>199</sup> Feeney (2016) 45–64; but see Wiseman (2016) reacting against the emphasis on translation.

<sup>200</sup> Clauss (2010) 466–7, who further suggests that Naevius' choice to compose the *Bellum Punicum* in saturnians like Livius' *Odusia* may have been 'a subtle nod to the association of that poem with the same event'. For similar views see Leigh (2010) and Biggs (2014). Cf. also Gruen (1990) 85.

<sup>201</sup> First noted by Jocelyn (1967) 353.

<sup>202</sup> See Cowan (2010a) 43–5, Gildenhard (2010) 173–5 (also on Ennius' *Achilles*), Biggs (2014) 152–4, Mac Góráin (2015) 236–40. On *Medea* as symbolic of the Greeks under the Second Macedonian War see Lefèvre (2001).

simultaneously to Rome. This is the case of Media in Pacuvius' *Medus*, interpreted by Bob Cowan as an analogical double for Rome in terms of its foundation myth,<sup>203</sup> or of Naevius' Gigantomachy, recently read by Basil Dufallo as possibly allegorical not only of Rome's coming victory over barbarian Carthage, but also as an image 'more hopeful than triumphalist, perhaps even cautionary',<sup>204</sup> reflective of Rome's hubristic plans for expansion in the Mediterranean. Moreover, Feeney's latest monograph ends on a surprising plot twist, according to which Ennius would compare Xerxes' crossing of the Hellespont to the actions of neither Hannibal nor Antiochus, but to Lucius Cornelius Scipio's crossing of the Hellespont in pursuit of Antiochus in 190 BCE.<sup>205</sup> Although it is unlikely that we will ever solve the mystery surrounding Ennius' fragment, the passage of Lucretius which includes the allusion to Ennius' *salsae lamae* (fr. 370 Sk.), alongside other Ennian allusions,<sup>206</sup> has Xerxes, whose *hybris* and arrogance have finally been levelled off by death, paired not with Hannibal, as might be expected, but with Scipio Africanus:<sup>207</sup>

ille quoque ipse, uiam qui quondam per mare magnum  
strauit iterque dedit legionibus ire per altum  
ac pedibus salsas docuit super ire lacunas  
et contempsit equis insultans murmura ponti,  
lumine adempto animam moribundo corpore fudit.  
Scipiadas, belli fulmen, Carthaginis horror,  
ossa dedit terrae proinde ac famul infimus esset.

(Lucr. 3.1029–35)

<sup>203</sup> Cowan (2010a) 47–8: Medea's son Medus avenges Aietes by killing his usurping brother Perses just like Romulus and Remus take revenge on Amulius to restore Numitor to the throne of Alba Longa.

<sup>204</sup> Dufallo (2013) 19.

<sup>205</sup> However, Feeney reads the comparison in oppositional terms; see Feeney (2016) 246, with reference to Veronica Shi: 'the impious act of Xerxes being opposed to the righteous return of the Romans to their original home'.

<sup>206</sup> Cf. Lucr. 3.1025 *lumina sis oculis bonus Ancus reliquit* and Ann. 137 Sk. *postquam lumina sis oculis bonus Ancus reliquit*, and Lucr. 3.1035 *ossa dedit terrae proinde ac famul infimus esset* and Ann. 313 *Reddidit † summo regno famul † ut † optimus esset*. The expression *belli fulmen* (Lucr. 3.1034, cf. A. 6.842, Cic. *Pro Balb.* 15.34) probably goes back to Ennius: see Skutsch (1968) 148 and 536–7.

<sup>207</sup> Interestingly, the younger Africanus will also be assimilated to Xerxes in a similar context, since his tears in front of the destruction of Carthage have a Xerxes precedent, see Chapter 4.5.1, p. 256.

## Carthaginian Constructions

Even he himself, who once paved a road across the great sea for his armies to pass over the deep, and taught them to walk on foot over the salt bays, and despised the roarings of the ocean as he trampled upon it with his cavalry, he also was robbed of the light and poured his spirit out of a dying body. The son of the house of Scipio, thunderbolt of war, terror of Carthage, gave his bones to the earth as though he had been the humblest menial.

Interestingly, as James Zetzel has provocatively suggested,<sup>208</sup> the same Scipio may have also been the subject of tongue-in-cheek panegyric in one of Ennius' two Scipio epigrams, if we compare the remark that for him alone 'the gate of heaven lies open' with an already mentioned epigram of Alcaeus of Messene that seems to accuse Philip V of the hubristic arrogance of Giants when encouraging him to set off on his road to Olympus.<sup>209</sup>

si fas endo plagas caelestum ascendere cuiquam,  
mi soli caeli maxima porta patet.

(Ennius, *Var.* 23–4 Vahlen)

If it is allowed to anyone to ascend into the realms of the gods, it is for me alone that the greatest gate of heaven lies open.

Μακύνου τείχη, Ζεῦ Ὀλύμπιε πάντα Φιλίππῳ  
ἄμβρατά χαλκείας κλείε πύλας μακάρων.  
χθὼν μὲν δὴ καὶ πόντος ὑπὸ σκῆπτροισι Φιλίππου  
δέδμηται λοιπὰ δ' ἅ πρὸς Ὀλυμπον ὁδός.

(*Anth. Pal.* 9.518)

Make the walls higher, Olympian Zeus: anything can be climbed by Philip. Lock the bronze gates of the immortals. Earth and sea are already bound under Philip's sceptre: what remains is the road to Olympus.

In [Chapter 2](#) I will explore more closely what happens when barbarian stereotypes are adapted to the Romans in the form of perverted models of moral behaviour. For now, it is worth noting that the transferability of the barbarian paradigm,

<sup>208</sup> Zetzel (2007) 14–16.

<sup>209</sup> See [n. 117](#).

together with the possibility of inversion inherent in any conceptualisation of 'the other', seems to make its appearance already in the mid-Republic, perhaps in concomitance with the difficulties that Roman culture was facing when attempting to define the borders of a collective identity in close emulation of, but also rivalry with, Greek culture. According to this perspective, it makes sense to interpret Rome's interest in staging tragedies that dealt with both barbarians and Trojans as part of the same obsession with the borders and limitations of diverse models of collective identities. I have suggested that the barbarians staged in mid-Republican theatre may have been representative of Rome's own barbarians, symbolic of what the Romans, placed on the same side as the Greeks as viewers, wished not to be: at the same time, there was always the risk that those barbarians – especially the Phrygians – would turn into a veritable mirror of what Romans would have looked like from a Greek point of view. In this respect, the role of the barbarians on stage could be played simultaneously by both Carthaginians and Romans. And, as we are about to see, this is exactly what happens in the only extant mid-Republican play that allows Carthage to make an appearance.

### 1.5 Plautus' *Poenulus* and the Mirror of the Enemy

The only dramatic piece on Carthaginians surviving from this period is not a tragedy, but a comedy initially disguised as a tragedy. In the prologue of his *Poenulus*, produced around a decade after the end of the Hannibalic War (possibly in 189 BCE),<sup>210</sup> Plautus seems to assume that, given the title of the play and the historical period in which it was

<sup>210</sup> Probably after the 189 BCE peace treaty with Carthage and the end of the Aetolian War, but certainly before the death of Antiochus (187 BCE), who is referred to at *Poen.* 694; see De Melo (2012) 13–14. It has often been proposed that the decade-long distance from the end of the war accounts for the sympathetic portrayal of Hanno in the play; cf. *Cist.* 202 *ut uobis uicti Poeni poenas sufferant*, 'let the conquered Punics suffer punishment', supposedly dated to the aftermath of the war.

being performed, the audience must be expecting a tragedy, and likely an Ennian tragedy, Ennius' adaptation of Aristarchus' *Achilles*:<sup>211</sup>

Achillem Aristarchi mihi commentari lubet:  
ind' mihi principium capiam, ex ea tragoedia  
'sileteque et tacete atque animum aduortite,  
audire iubet uos imperator' – histicus,  
bonoque ut animo sedeant in subselliis,  
et qui esurientes et qui saturi uenerint ...

(Plaut. *Poen.* 1–6)

I wish to rehearse the *Achilles* by Aristarchus; from there, from that tragedy, I'll take my beginning: 'be silent and be quiet and pay attention; you are ordered to listen by the commander of' ... actors; and both those who've come hungry and those who've come full should sit on their benches with goodwill ...

The most plausible significance for such a disguise would lie in a connection between the tragic genre and the recent war. As John Henderson puts it, 'right from the moment Plautus first picked (on) the Greek original, he knew Carthage must speak to deep emotions and scars – fear, hatred, scorn, exultation ...'.<sup>212</sup> So terrifying would the audience's reaction to Carthaginians be, so hated their name (*Poen.* 50–1 *sed nisi molestum est, nomen dare uobis uolo | comoediai; sin odio est, dicam tamen ...*, 'but if you don't object, I want to give you the name of the comedy; if it does annoy, I'll still say it ...') that Plautus does not even venture to pronounce it, and proposes most unlikely titles for this play referred to by grammarians as *Poenulus*, probably playing with phonetic alliterations: *Plautus Patruos Pultiphagonides*, 'Plautus, uncle, son of Porridge-eater' (*Poen.* 53–5 *Καρχηδόνιος uocatur haec comoedia; | latine Plautus patruos pultiphagonides, | nomen iam habetis*, 'This comedy is called *Karchedonios*; in Latin Plautus, uncle, son of

<sup>211</sup> See Maurach (1975) 123–4, Slater (1992) 136–7; on Ennius' *Achilles*, see Jocelyn (1967) 67–71 and 161–77. Text and translations of the *Poenulus* are taken from De Melo (2012) unless specified.

<sup>212</sup> Henderson (1999) 9.

Porridge-eater \*\*\*. You already have the name').<sup>213</sup> Such an obvious connection between tragedy and war makes further explanation superfluous, but it is nonetheless worth putting forward the suggestion that Plautus may allude to a specific connection between the Hannibalic War and the tragedies, especially Ennius', that were performed during the *ludi* of the preceding years. We may wonder whether this opening on Ennius' *Achilles* could be interpreted as a signal that the play will engage with previous and contemporary Latin tragedies through allusions and hints that we are unfortunately unable to trace, since it is likely that the same recent historical themes<sup>214</sup> comically represented by Plautus in his rewriting of a Greek original<sup>215</sup> had been metaphorically treated in mythical disguise on the tragic stage. As both Virgil and Livy will retrospectively testify, tragedy was the proprietary genre for the Second Punic War: one could not speak of the latter without the tools of the former. And yet, in *Poenulus*' time, once 'the state is at peace and the enemies have been killed, one ought not to raise a riot' (*Poen.* 524–5 *praesertim in re populi placida atque interfectis hostibus | non decet tumultuari*). It is as if *metus Punicus* had stepped back, superseded by an ironically detached mixture of sympathy,<sup>216</sup> admiration,<sup>217</sup> curiosity and – above all – laughter.

<sup>213</sup> Scholars agree in regarding the passage as corrupt, and either suppose a lacuna after line 53 (Geppert in 1870) or emend the text reading the genitive of *Plautus* (Kammermeister in 1558) or the accusative of *Patruus*. Either way, it is clear that 'something is wrong here', Franko (1996) 427 n. 3.

<sup>214</sup> Not only the Hannibalic War (on which see Leigh (2004) 24–56), but also the Aetolian, perhaps hinted at by the setting in Calydon (Henderson (1999) 7, Richlin (2005) 187–8), and the introduction of the cult of Venus Erycina in Rome in 217 BCE, followed by the dedication of the temple in 215 BCE; see Galinsky (1969b), Henderson (1999) 8.

<sup>215</sup> It is clear from the fragments preserved that Plautus' original cannot have been Menander's *Karchedonios*, since that play was concerned with a Carthaginian man who struggles to be registered as an Athenian citizen. Since the 'discovery' of Dietze (1901) 82 that Antamonides' insult at Agorastocles at *Poen.* 1318 *nam te cinaedum esse arbitror* is a translation of the only extant fragment of Alexis' *Karchedonios* (fr. 105 Kassel-Austin βάκχιλος εἶ), Alexis' play has been identified as the Greek original: see Arnott (1959) and (2004), Maurach (1975) 141. Further evidence was supposedly found in a correspondence between *Poen.* 522–3 and 525 and an unattributed fragment of Alexis (fr. 265 K-A).

<sup>216</sup> Galinsky (1969b) 358.

<sup>217</sup> Franko (1996) 450.



A matter hitherto in the charge of military generals has now become the intellectual property of the manager of a comic troupe (*Poen.* 4 *imperator ... histricus!*).<sup>218</sup> Once the tragedy of war is definitively over, the comedy can finally begin.

Plautus' *Poenulus*, the only surviving full text from which to reconstruct early Latin stereotypes of Carthaginians, features a 'little Carthaginian' who has been observed to show clear signs of barbarian polarisation, some of which have been thought by Emma Dench to be directly or indirectly adopted from the Athenian stereotypes of the barbarian Persians.<sup>219</sup> At the same time, however, Plautus' Hanno has also been recognised by many as a highly sympathetic and Romanised character, a recognition which emphasises a double characterisation of Carthage<sup>220</sup> perfectly in line, as we shall see in [Chapter 2](#), with Virgil's depiction of Carthage, whose status as an 'anti-Rome'<sup>221</sup> indicates both a mirroring and an oppositional rapport. To start with Hanno's barbarian features, the stereotypical portrayal of this *Poenus*, which may also be intimated in the title of the comedy,<sup>222</sup> is detectable from the first appearance of this still anonymous character in the prologue of the play. Here the audience is informed of Hanno's behaviour prior to his arrival on the scene, when he travelled the whole Mediterranean in search of his lost daughters:

sed pater illarum Poenus, postquam eas perdidit,  
mari te<rraque> usquequaque quaeritat.  
ubi quamque in urbem est ingressus, ilico  
omnis meretrices, ubi quisque habitant, inuenit;  
dat aurum, ducit noctem, rogat postibi  
und' sit, quoiatis, captane an surrupta sit,  
quo genere gnata, qui parentes fuerint.  
ita docte atque astu filias quaerit suas.

<sup>218</sup> On *histricus* as a pun on Histria, with reference to the second Illyrian War, see Richlin (2005) 188.

<sup>219</sup> Dench (1995) 72.

<sup>220</sup> On this mixed portrayal of Hanno, see especially Gruen (2011) 126–9.

<sup>221</sup> See Hardie (1990).

<sup>222</sup> According to Franko (1996) 428–9, *Poenulus* is a combination of a diminutive with an ethnic which emphasises the already negative connotations of *Poenus*. It is used in a pejorative sense in its only other Latin occurrence (Cic. *Fin.* 4.56 *tuus ille Poenulus*) and can be broadly compared to *Graeculus* in its formation.

## Plautus' *Poenulus* and the Mirror of the Enemy

et is omnis linguas scit, sed dissimulat sciens  
se scire: Poenus plane est. quid uerbis opust?

(Plaut. *Poen.* 104–13)

But ever since their Carthaginian father lost them, he's been looking for them everywhere by sea and by land. Whenever he enters a city, he immediately finds out where all the prostitutes live. He pays money, hires her for a night, and then asks where she's from and what country she comes from, whether she was captured in war or kidnapped, what family she comes from, and who her parents were. In this way he looks for his daughters cleverly and smartly. He also knows all languages, but he knowingly pretends not to know: he's an out-and-out Carthaginian. What need is there for words?

The brief description of Hanno in the prologue is framed in ring composition by the repetition of the adjective *Poenus*, perhaps a negative ethnic tag,<sup>223</sup> in which case obviously reinforced by the whole of line 113: 'he's an out-and-out Carthaginian. What need is there for words?' Yet before this appreciation that his biased Roman audience must already be well informed about Punic stereotypes, Plautus has already refreshed their memory with some of the most famous Carthaginian traits, such as licentiousness (107 *omnis meretrices ... inuenit*), craftiness (111 *docte atque astu*) and deceitfulness (112 *dissimulat*). Some scholars have also thought that this passage implies a potentially incestuous relationship between this Punic *pater* and his daughters, since Hanno first spends the night with the prostitutes he finds in towns, and only *then* (108 *postibi*) does he inquire about their origins in order to find out whether they might be his daughters.<sup>224</sup> In addition to this, there is clear emphasis on Hanno's plurilingualism, a trait that will be one of the main comic themes in the play. Not only does he speak 'all languages' (112 *omnis linguas*), like the fascinating Cleopatra of Plutarch (Plut.

<sup>223</sup> See Franko (1994); *contra* Prag (2006).

<sup>224</sup> Such incestuous connotations would arguably be taken up towards the end of the play, in the 'flirtatious greeting between father and daughters' which the soldier Antamonides at 1297 calls a *conduplicatio* and *congeminitio*: Franko (1996) 430 n. 7, Henderson (1999) 16–17, Starks (2000) 168; *contra* Leigh (2004) 30 n. 29, De Melo (2012) 12.

*Ant.* 27.2–3), but he also, more importantly, *dissimulates* such knowledge. Partially, this trait adds to both his Punic untrustworthiness<sup>225</sup> and his alleged similarity to Hannibal,<sup>226</sup> while also serving the purpose of emphasising his slippery, serpentine lack of a clear national identity in a period which saw a man like Cato dissimulating his knowledge of Greek and addressing the Athenians in Latin as a means of reinforcing a feeling of Roman national pride.<sup>227</sup>

In the *Poenulus*, Carthaginians already appear as clever and sophisticated, easily morphed into Romans, and so all the less to be trusted. Hanno, the Carthaginian whose outstanding Latin allows him to produce extremely refined and educated puns,<sup>228</sup> is ‘something of a mix’,<sup>229</sup> a swindler and a trickster with a two-forked tongue:

at hercle te hominem et sycophantam et subdolum,  
qui huc aduenisti nos captatum, migdilix,  
bisulci lingua quasi proserpens bestia.

(*Poen.* 1032–4)

But you must be a swindler and a trickster since you’ve come here in order to catch us out, you ‘double-tongued creature’ (*migdilix*), with a forked tongue like a creeping beast.

Similarly, the sympathetic Carthaginian queen who seems to understand so well both Aeneas’ present situation and his past toils, belongs, at least according to the Virgilian Venus’ view, to an ‘ambiguous’ and emphatically ‘double-tongued’ race (*A.* 1.661 *domum ... ambiguum Tyriosque bilinguis*, ‘the treacherous

<sup>225</sup> Note that the Latin *bilinguis* often has a negative connotation (*OLD* s.v. 3 ‘double-tongued’, ‘deceitful’, ‘treacherous’). See Gruen (2011) 128–9; on the suspicions aroused by multilingualism in the monolingual see Adams (2003) 11–2 and 205 on the *Poenulus*. Cf. Starks (2000) 168.

<sup>226</sup> Analysed by Leigh (2004) 33–5.

<sup>227</sup> On the potential loss of identity induced by bilingualism, see Adams (2003) 571–2; on Cato, Gruen (1992) 80–1 and (2011) 129.

<sup>228</sup> See Gratwick (1972) 230 on *Poen.* 967–70.

<sup>229</sup> The meaning of *migdilix*, if the reading is sound, is unknown; De Melo translates it as ‘double-tongued creature’ because it may derive from Greek *migda* (‘in a mixed way’) and Latin *-lix* (‘tongue’). Some emended it to *migdlilis*, ‘mixed Libyan’; see Franko (1996) 434 n. 4, Faller (2004) 168. On Hanno’s mixed character cf. Gruen (2011) 128: ‘Hanno in the end is a complex, even paradoxical character, a bundle of mixed characteristics, ranging from the estimable to the questionable.’

house, and the double-tongued Tyrians').<sup>230</sup> Moreover, alongside his emphasised deceitfulness and trickery,<sup>231</sup> which assimilates him to both the *seruus callidus* of Plautus' theatre and to Hannibal, his historical counterpart,<sup>232</sup> Hanno is especially mocked for his loose, unbelted clothing (*Poen.* 975–6, 1008, 1121, 1298), which apparently makes him similar to a bird when he appears on stage (975 *sed quae illaec auis est quae huc cum tunicis aduenit?*, 'but who is that bird that's coming here with the tunics?'),<sup>233</sup> and seems to indicate his lasciviousness or effeminacy (*Poen.* 1303 *sane genus hoc mulierosum est tunicis demissiciis*, 'this kind with their tunics hanging down is definitely addicted to women | womanish').<sup>234</sup> This emphasis on foreignness and lasciviousness (together with a possible hint at incest) which we find in Plautus' *Poenulus* does not necessarily need to be linked to the Athenian construction of the Persian barbarian, even though the Punic passages<sup>235</sup> in the *Poenulus* might look back at the pseudo-Persian speech in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* (*Ach.* 100–4) and the plot of the first half of the play seems based on that of Plautus' *Persa*. Nonetheless, Athenian discourse on the Persians remains a basic model to look at for the construction of barbarian stereotypes. In the case of the *Poenulus*, two major traits emerge from the

<sup>230</sup> On the relation between the two passages, see Leigh (2004) 33, Gruen (2011) 129.

<sup>231</sup> Cf. *Poen.* 1106 *lepide hercle assimulas* ('you are pretending in a delightful way') and 1125 *praestrigiator hic quidem Poenus probust* ('this Carthaginian is a clever trickster'). See Starks (2000) 171–4.

<sup>232</sup> For the suggestion that the tricksterism of Hannibal may have influenced the *seruus* of Plautine comedy to a significant degree, see Leigh (2004) 24–56.

<sup>233</sup> The same bird-like appearance might be hinted at by the mysterious *gugga* of *Poen.* 977 (*facies quidem edepol Punica est. gugga est homo*, 'his appearance is certainly Carthaginian. The chap's a *gugga*'), perhaps the purple heron, also called the 'treacherous bird' by the Romans, which would thus join into one the stereotypes of deceitfulness and bizarre clothing, a suggestion by Gratwick (1972) 231–3; see *contra* De Melo (2012) 122–3, who takes it to be the name of a profession, perhaps 'tradesman'.

<sup>234</sup> *Mulierosus* (different from *muliebris*) more likely indicates 'fondness for women' rather than 'effeminacy', but see *contra* Franko (1996) 430 n. 8 and 444. Dido's girdle is also loosened before her death (*A.* 4.518 *in ueste recincta*), although in connection to the ritual context: see Pease (1935) 433. Africans are again represented as wearing loose robes at *A.* 8.724 (*discinctos ... Afros*), in contrast to the Roman military dress, see Fordyce (1977) 286.

<sup>235</sup> On which see De Melo (2012) 173–222 with bibliography.

picture: deceitfulness (related to trickery, dexterity, craftiness) and lasciviousness (to which incest and perhaps effeminacy are connected), both themes which can be ridiculed and at the same time still appear threatening. Deceitfulness has a counterpart in heinous cruelty, while lasciviousness and effeminacy remind us that the ancients regarded women as frenzied creatures, who can easily lose self-control. As Dench puts it, ‘womanish enemies may likewise be both weak and beyond male control at the same time: when womanishness is juxtaposed with the cruelty supposedly typical of barbarians, the mixture is potent’.<sup>236</sup>

However, not all scholarship agrees on an utterly negative and stereotyped reading of Hanno. Gratwick, for example, recognised that Hanno, Punic for ‘the Blest’,<sup>237</sup> who comes on stage and in *Calydon rite* (*Poen.* 951), venerating ‘the gods and goddesses who inhabit this city’ (*Poen.* 950 *deos deasque ueneror qui hanc urbem colunt*),<sup>238</sup> ‘is in fact by far the most pious character in the whole of Roman comedy’.<sup>239</sup> Ironically, piety, the ‘dominant trait of his character’,<sup>240</sup> is precisely the trait that he will happen to share almost two centuries later with the hero of Virgil’s *Aeneid*. A couple of years before Gratwick, Galinsky had already noted that Hanno, ‘a model of piety’, is marked by a ‘surprisingly sympathetic and “Roman” characterization’,<sup>241</sup> a fact which induced him to believe not only that the *Poenulus* of the title, ‘the little Carthaginian’, is actually Agorastocles, Hanno’s nephew, but that both Naevius and Plautus, who do not show any trace of hatred towards Carthage, ‘seem to have done their best not to allow this hostile tendency, which doubtless was strong in their times, to vitiate their poetry’.<sup>242</sup> Galinsky’s reading of the whole play as a sort

<sup>236</sup> Dench (1995) 73.

<sup>237</sup> See Maurach (1975) 67, Faller (2004) 174.

<sup>238</sup> Cf. 953 *di uostram fidem!*, 967 *pro di immortales, opseco uostram fidem!*, 988 *pro di immortales!* and other attestations of Hanno’s piety at *Poen.* 1056, 1163–4, 1187–8, 1251–5, 1274.

<sup>239</sup> Gratwick (1971) 32 n. 5.

<sup>240</sup> Gratwick (1971) 32.

<sup>241</sup> Galinsky (1969b) 358.

<sup>242</sup> Galinsky (1969b) 359.

of commemoration of the introduction of the cult of Venus Erycina to Rome and the dedication of her temple in 215 BCE, frames his interpretation of the character of Hanno, whose Punic traits are undoubtedly hinted at by Plautus, but his overall 'Romanization' indicates that 'this enemy had been conquered by Rome not only physically, but spiritually as well'.<sup>243</sup>

Plautus' Carthaginian, whose portrait seemed so negatively stereotyped in the prologue of the play, comes on stage once the plot already seems to have ended,<sup>244</sup> and addresses the gods of the city in a bilingual Punic–Latin speech (*Poen.* 930–60)<sup>245</sup> which establishes his pious characterisation. His second intervention in the play (967–70) features a sophisticated wordplay between *sorditudo* and *surditia* which further marks his control of the Latin language.<sup>246</sup> In his third (982–4), after having already demonstrated his assimilation of Latin culture in terms of both religious customs and language, he finally confesses his ability to 'adapt' to the Roman language and stage (984 *tum ad horum mores linguam uortero*, 'I'll adapt my language to their costumes'), notwithstanding his insistence on addressing the other characters in Punic, which matches his ability to dissimulate his plurilingualism anticipated in the prologue of the play (112–13). From this point onwards, the most entertaining

<sup>243</sup> Galinsky (1969b) 364. See Starks (2000) 182–5 on Hanno's ambiguous portrait reflecting the mixed feelings of the Romans towards Carthage in the 190s.

<sup>244</sup> As in a properly concluded Plautine plot, the pimp has been fooled (*Poen.* 787), and the *amans ephēbus* will eventually gain his beloved. Only, we have to wait for the end of the *Aphrodisia* before going to trial ('tomorrow', *Poen.* 800); in the meantime, the plot can progress, though not exactly accordingly to Milphio's own machinations (*Poen.* 817 *expecto quo pacto meae techinae processuræ sient*, 'I'm waiting to see how my tricks will work out'). The following section, where Syncerastus, another slave, seems to be doubling the prologue for Milphio, works as an introduction to the second half of the play, where Hanno will replace Milphio in his role. Just before Hanno's arrival, Milphio expresses his intention to go and tell Agorastocles about the progression of the play's plot (*Poen.* 920–9); the fact that Hanno's arrival precedes him is already a hint at his losing control of the stage. On this 'sense of an ending' before Hanno's entrance, see Slater (1992) 140–1. On the two plots of the *Poenulus*, see Lefèvre (2004) 11–18.

<sup>245</sup> The MSS transmit two Punic (930–9 and 940–9) and one Latin (950–60) versions of the speech. I align myself with those scholars who believe that Hanno pronounced the speech in both Punic and Latin. See the discussion in De Melo (2012) 173–222 with up-to-date bibliography.

<sup>246</sup> See Gratwick (1972) 230.

piece in the play begins, with Milphio, the *seruus callidus*, pretending to understand Hanno's Punic and proposing to Agorastocles implausible translations until Hanno feels finally forced to speak Latin (1029 *aut ut scias, nunc dehinc latine iam loquar*, 'but so as to make you know, I'll speak Latin from now on'). This moment marks the exchange between Milphio and Hanno: if Milphio had proposed 'a clear metatheatrical challenge'<sup>247</sup> when boasting that 'no Carthaginian would be more Carthaginian than him' in this play (991 *nullus me est hodie Poenus Poenior*), Hanno has picked up that challenge demonstrating that he is not only *Poenior*, but specifically more *callidus*. Milphio, deprived of his conventional role, turns to insulting ethnic tags, and especially Punic ones, of the kind we have already seen (1032–4). Yet the rest of the play will manage to find a perfect compromise between the little Carthaginian's trickery and his piety, since Hanno can be Punically wily, but prefers to exploit this trait against an enemy (1089–90 *Mil. potin tu fieri subdolos?* *Han. inimico possum, amico est insipientia*, 'Mil. Can you become wily? Han. Toward an enemy I can, toward a friend it's stupidity'). Thus the tears unleashed by his familiar piety, once he understands he may have found his daughters, are taken by Milphio to express his outstanding Punic ability to pretend and deceive (1106 *lepide hercle assimulas*, 'you're pretending in a delightful way', 1107–18 *eu hercle mortalem catum, | malum crudumque et callidum et subdolum!*, 'goodness, a tricky mortal, bad and unfeeling and clever and wily!'), which makes him an incredible Punic *praestrigiator* (1125 *praestrigiator hic quidem Poenus probust*, 'this Carthaginian is a clever trickster').

Metatheatrically speaking, Carthaginian dissimulation has become intertwined with acting, and Punic wiliness is one and the same with the *calliditas* of the stock figure of the *seruus* of Plautus' 'barbarian' comedy, which has become this time properly Latin.<sup>248</sup> Like Plautus himself, the *imperator histricus* of

<sup>247</sup> Maurice (2004) 281.

<sup>248</sup> On 'barbarian Plautus', see Lefèvre-Stärk-Vogt-Spira (1991). It is interesting to note that, in contrast to the usual *Plautus uortit barbare* of the other comedies, in this play Plautus uses *latine* (54, 1029): see Fantham (2004) 238.



the prologue (4), this Carthaginian is so tricky as to 'bring everyone over to his opinion' (1126 *perduxit omnis ad suam sententiam*) through mere acting. The similarity between Hanno and Plautus goes back to the beginning of the play, where Plautus was apparently struggling to give us that title which, according to most scholars, is lost in a lacuna of the text. The Greek title of the play is no doubt Καρχηδόνιος (53), but the Latin one cannot be *Plautus Patruos Pultiphagonides* (54), 'Plautus, uncle, son of Porridge-eater'. Now, whereas Plautus' name is explicit, *Patruos* probably refers to Hanno, who is continually addressed as 'uncle' by Agorastocles in the second half of the play, where the focus has shifted from his distinct Carthaginian nature (113 *Poenus plane est*) to the power of Venus and the importance of family bonds (1158 *mi patruie, salve. nam nunc es plane meus*, 'greetings, my dear uncle: now you're really mine').<sup>249</sup> The third name, instead, is ironically appropriate to both Romans and Carthaginians alike: on the one hand, *pultiphagonides* (the son of Porridge-eater) may be a substitute for *Karch-edonios*, felt as combining the Aramaic *qrh* and perhaps Punic *karch* for 'pea' with the Latin *edere*, 'to eat';<sup>250</sup> on the other, though, *pultiphagus* is a Roman 'barbarian' from a Greek point of view (*Most.* 828 *pultiphagus opifex ... barbarus*), with *puls* as 'the ancient national dish among the Roman peasants'.<sup>251</sup> In addition, *Pultiphagonides* may be particularly appropriate for Plautus himself, if it is, as Gratwick suggested, a periphrasis for *Maccius*, on the basis of the evidence that the word *maccum* occurs in a late glossary as an explanation for κοκκολάχανον, *puls*.<sup>252</sup> Plautus' entire name, T. Maccius Plautus, would thus mean something like 'flat-footed son of a pottage-eating clown'.<sup>253</sup> The two possible etymological explanations

<sup>249</sup> Cf. Henderson (1999) 31: 'This tableau of familial *amplexus* – parent-child, sibling and cousinly, affianced and affinal – muddled with amatory *amplexus* – lover and beloved, seducer and virgin, cheque-book and trick, top gun and concubine. Such is the messiness of Venus' absolute, and indiscriminate, power over human relations and sociality under heaven. The *right* mess.'

<sup>250</sup> Copley (1970); contra Gowers (1993) 55 n. 18.

<sup>251</sup> Ramsay (1869) 161.

<sup>252</sup> Gratwick (1973) 78 n. 6.

<sup>253</sup> Gowers (1993) 54.



for the use of *Pultiphagonides* in this line do not necessarily need to be thought of as mutually contradictory, especially in view of the similarity between the deceitful protagonist of the play and its deceiving author: both Hanno and Plautus, both Romans and Carthaginians, are, from a Greek point of view, barbarian eaters of porridge. Yet, it is not altogether certain that Hanno really is the *Poenulus* we are looking for, the ‘little Carthaginian’.<sup>254</sup> Yes, he is belittled both in his name (Hanno ‘the Blest’, a diminutive for Hannibal, ‘the mercy of Baal’) and in his physical stature (1310 *hallex uiri*, ‘dregs of a man’), but the *Poenulus* might as well be, as Galinsky believes,<sup>255</sup> the young (-er than his Uncle) Agorastocles, who, despite having forgotten Punic and being ‘Aetolized’<sup>256</sup> is still a bit – or a *little* – Carthaginian, marked with a childish and capricious impatience leading to naïvety in the fulfilment of his purposes. Or it could just as well be Milphio, not Carthaginian at all, but in his words ‘more Punic than the Punic’ (991), although he will soon discover that the real *Poenus* has been fooling him in turn and has eventually replaced him in his stock role of *seruus callidus*: a hard humiliation to endure, well deserved for a character who might be a little Punic in his trickery, but who certainly is not Punic enough.<sup>257</sup> But *Poenulae* are also the young daughters of Hanno,<sup>258</sup> kidnapped from their city when they were four and five, together with their nurse, *statura hau magna* (1112). And well, if the *Karch-edonius* really is a porridge-eater, any Roman can be found out to be, at least a *little*, Carthaginian.

Hanno is clearly the only ‘real’ Carthaginian of the play, but that does not interest us any more. The translation of this *Poenus* has created a protagonist no more *barbarus* to Plautus’ elected theatrical city than any other character in the play,<sup>259</sup> and no more than any ancient porridge-eating Roman to the

<sup>254</sup> See Richlin (2005) 186–7.

<sup>255</sup> Galinsky (1969b) 358.

<sup>256</sup> ‘Ein Musterbeispiel für kulturelle Integration’, Faller (2004) 166.

<sup>257</sup> Franko (1996) 435: ‘There is indeed someone *Poenior* than he.’

<sup>258</sup> See Fantham (2004).

<sup>259</sup> Fantham (2004) 237: ‘None of the *dramatis personae* is a natural Aetolian citizen.’

eyes of Greek people: what is on stage here is ultimately multicultural integration.<sup>260</sup> And it is all set up by a flat-footed *Hanno–Plautus* who is no less author and engine of this play than his historical counterpart *Hannibal* – not a ‘*histricus*’ *imperator* – had been in the making up of a long-term tragedy on a set of chosen stages from Spain to Italy. Now, Carthage has been defeated, *belittled* into a Roman *Karthaginula* and, once destroyed, it will be ... forgotten. If Hanno’s first utterance is one of explicit veneration of the gods of *this* city, this is because the end of the Hannibalic War has transformed this *Poenus* into a simple *Patruus*. Carthaginians, like the title of the play, now need emendation in order to be restored. With superb irony the *Poenulus*, one of the first documents for our reconstruction of Punic traits, is also the first to turn the real nature of Carthage into not only a philological crux, but a cultural and historical lacuna.

<sup>260</sup> See especially Starks (2000).

## CHAPTER 2

### POLARITY AND ANALOGY IN VIRGIL'S CARTHAGE

The hero of Greek tragedy stands at the point where the boundaries of opposing identities meet, where 'identity' in fact becomes the paradoxical conjunction of two opposites.

Charles Segal<sup>1</sup>

#### 2.1 Virgil's Barbarian Theatre

In the [preceding chapter](#), I have examined the scanty evidence available to us for the reconstruction of a portrait of the Carthaginians as Rome's 'other' or 'barbarians' in the middle Republic. I proposed a model of continuity with Greek culture (and scholarship) in exploring what could be dubbed, in imitation of Edith Hall's famous study, the 'Invention of the Carthaginian', and concluded that even though the fragmentary evidence from the early period renders any attempt at reconstruction speculative and problematic, a combined analysis of the sources seems to indicate that the invention of the Carthaginian 'other' went hand in hand with the simultaneous invention of the Roman 'self', and that fictional Carthaginians such as Plautus' Hanno were characterised by a high degree of analogy with, as well as polarity from, the projected auto-representations of the Romans in the literary sources. Moreover, I put forward the suggestion that the literary strategies used to polarise the Carthaginians in the middle Republic were adopted from the anti-barbarian ideological discourse of fifth-century Athens, filtered by its Hellenistic reception, whose presence in the literature and art of the Augustan age is pervasive beyond any doubt.

<sup>1</sup> Segal (1986) 34.

Following from the analeptic digression on the middle Republic, the present chapter returns to the portrait of Carthaginians in the Augustan age with the aim of providing a clarification for proposing the adoption of the fifth-century Athenian anti-barbarian model in the first place, since the *Aeneid* offers clear and abundant similarities between Carthaginians and Persians in terms of orientalist stereotypes, similarities that can be traced by means of a sustained comparison between Virgil's Carthage episode and Aeschylus' *Persae*. Although it is likely that Virgil was familiar with the *Persae*, the argument put forward in this chapter is not that Virgil borrows directly from Aeschylus, but rather that he draws upon a set of orientalist tropes that originated in fifth-century Athenian anti-Persian discourse and can only be mapped in the *Aeneid* with the help of Aeschylus' *Persae*. These tropes, however, may have well been present in other texts, especially those tragedies concerned with barbarian themes that we have noted being popular on the mid-Republican stage.<sup>2</sup> As already anticipated, *Medea* and *Bacchae*, two recurring models in mid-Republican theatre, and two tragedies which dealt metaphorically with the barbarian on the Athenian tragic stage long after the barbarian was 'invented', also happen to be Virgil's favourite tragic models for the construction of his epic Carthage. In both cases, Virgilian scholars and commentators, at least since Servius, have noted that Virgil here is using not just the Euripidean originals, but also their mid-Republican adaptations, especially Ennius' *Medea Exul* and Pacuvius' *Pentheus* or *Bacchae*.<sup>3</sup> As Marco Fernandelli puts it in his discussion of Dido's theatrical dream in *Aeneid* 4, the movement of the passage, opening with *Eumenidum* (4.469) and closing with

<sup>2</sup> See [Chapter 1.4](#), p. 70.

<sup>3</sup> On the connections between Virgil's Dido and Ennius' *Medea* see [n. 144](#) in this chapter. The idea of Virgil's debt to a lost *Pentheus* of Pacuvius in Dido's dreaming of Pentheus at *A.* 4.469–70 derives from a joint note of Servius and Servius Danielis *ad A.* 4.469, with Servius Danielis providing the summary of the *Pentheus*. On Pacuvius' *Pentheus* see Schierl (2006) 418–22. See Fernandelli (2002) for a discussion of the *Quellenforschung* for Dido's dream, and on how the mixture of Greek and Latin theatrical models ultimately draws attention to the metatheatrical nature of *Aeneid* 4.

*Dirae* (4.473), provides a metaliterary note on the transposition of the 'Furies' (almost a byword for tragedy) from Greece to Rome, and on their translation from Aeschylus' into Ennius' *Eumenides*.<sup>4</sup>

Clearly the loss of mid-Republican literature makes it possible only to speculate over the degree of Virgilian innovation in the *Aeneid*. It will soon appear evident that the present book sides with a view of the *Aeneid* as a text which is innovative for its ability to join together old elements to new effect, rather than for specific innovations in plot or imagery, which appear instead built upon extremely thick layers of erudition that we will never be able to dig through exhaustively. For example, in [Chapter 3](#), I argue (in the wake of Philip Hardie's seminal work on *Fama* in the *Aeneid*)<sup>5</sup> that while I am inclined to believe that Virgil adopted the meeting between Aeneas and Dido from Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*, the personification of *Fama* shows that he twists this plot to draw attention to the altering of myth and history in a way that would have been unthinkable in Naevius' times. In [Chapter 1](#), I posited that while we may never be able to ascertain whether connections between Carthaginians and fifth-century Athenian barbarians are an innovation of the Augustan age, and of Virgil in particular, it is more plausible to imagine that they were somehow present in mid-Republican texts. However, as I shall now go on to show, it is Virgil's text only that draws attention to the barbarian enemy as a necessary construction in a post-Civil Wars era, and although we have seen that the characterisation of the enemy as 'shadow self' may be traced back to the middle Republic, the final section of this chapter will posit that it is nonetheless a peculiar feature of Virgil's *Aeneid* to let these polarisations collapse to the effect of unmasking the machine of foreign war and foregrounding the horror of civil conflict.

Moreover, I propose that it is the tragic genre that allows Virgil to put into effect this traumatic narrative of foreign and civil war in the *Aeneid*, and especially in the Carthage episode,

<sup>4</sup> See Fernandelli (2002) 180–1. On Ennius' *Eumenides* see Manuwald (2012) 123–9.

<sup>5</sup> See especially Hardie (1986) 273–80 and (2012) 79–112.

where tragic tropes help him both to narrate the subjective story of Dido and to insert echoes of Rome's traumatic history by means of subtle allusions to Punic and Civil Wars. If Virgil's strategy is to blend tragedy and epic to the effect of providing a joint narrative of (Greek/Roman) myth and Roman history, then he is still following in the footsteps of his Latin predecessors, Naevius and Ennius, in composing a single poetic work that would replace their whole epic *and* tragic production. Indeed, it is commonly recognised that tragedy is the most prominent genre alongside epic in the *Aeneid*.<sup>6</sup> It was at the time receiving much attention from Virgil's contemporaries,<sup>7</sup> and had been compared with and analysed alongside epic in literary theoretical treatises from Plato and Aristotle onwards.<sup>8</sup> Most importantly, it constituted half of the work of the poets from which Latin literature sprang: Livius Andronicus, Naevius, Ennius.<sup>9</sup> Those who have recognised a polarity rather than an interaction between the epic and the tragic genre in the *Aeneid* have connected tragedy to the apparent alternation of tone between the poem's odd-numbered and even-numbered

<sup>6</sup> Present already in the work of ancient commentators, a striking profusion of tragic intertexts is found in the commentary of La Cerda. Emphasis on the theme was brought back by Heinze (1993) 252–8 and 370–3, but started to receive due attention from the 1970s onwards (see Conte (2007) 44 n. 26). After König (1970), the only monograph whose title suggests a comprehensive study of the topic is Panoussi (2009), a book far from succeeding in its aim. Other monographs have covered more circumscribed themes: see Fenik (1960) for Euripides in the *Aeneid*, Stabryła (1970) for Latin tragedy in Virgil, Bocciolini Palagi (2007) for Dionysiac motifs in Book 7 and Mac Góráin (2009) for the influence of Euripides' *Bacchae* and the Dionysiac in the *Aeneid*, the main arguments resumed and extended in Mac Góráin (2013), and in a forthcoming monograph. A monograph on tragedy in the *Aeneid*, with particular regard for Book 4, is also expected from Fernandelli; see now Fernandelli (1995) (1996a) (1996b) (2002) and (2002–3). On tragedy in the *Aeneid* see also Maguinness (1963), Foster (1973–4), E. L. Harrison (1972–3), Hardie (1997), C. Weber (2002), Galinsky (2003), Polleichtner (2013); on Latin tragedy, Zorzetti (1990); on Aeschylus, Hardie (1991); on the Dido episode, Wlosok (1976), Muecke (1983), Moles (1987), E. L. Harrison (1989), Pobjoy (1998), Oliensis (2001), A. Barchiesi (2001) 118–19, Krummen (2004); on the Medea–Dido intertext, Collard (1975), Schiesaro (2005a) and (2008), Baraz (2009).

<sup>7</sup> See Stabryła (1970) 9–18.

<sup>8</sup> Mac Góráin (2009) 5. For Homer as πρῶτος τῶν τραγικοποιῶν, see Plato *Rep.* x.595c, 607a and Aristotle *Poet.* chapters 4–5.

<sup>9</sup> Maguinness (1963) 478, Stabryła (1970) 12, E. L. Harrison (1989) 2–3, Hardie (1997) 323.

books.<sup>10</sup> The only attempt at theorising Virgil's use of this *Kreuzung der Gattungen* in the *Aeneid* beyond the schematic polarisations attributed to the so-called 'Harvard School'<sup>11</sup> is found in two essays by Gian Biagio Conte which are not free from contradictions: on the one hand, the alternation between epic and tragedy functions in a reconciliation of dichotomies (objectivity and subjectivity, unity and multiplicity, *sympatheia* and *empathia*),<sup>12</sup> but on the other tragedy seems also to overthrow epic and become the most apt vehicle of expression for a poem whose main feature lies in what Conte labels a 'strategy of contradiction'.<sup>13</sup>

Without dismissing this line of interpretation, this chapter argues that the abundance of tragic intertexts and features in the Carthage episode may also derive, at least in part, from the fact that the *Aeneid* opens on the shores of Rome's barbarian enemy. It is from its very inception that this poem, in recounting Aeneas' dangerous diversion to the shores of Carthage on his way to the future site of Rome, presents itself as in direct dialogue not only with Homer's *Odyssey* and its Latin translation, Livius Andronicus' *Odusia*, but also with the Latin epics of Naevius and Ennius that recounted the very historical conflict whose mythological *aition* Virgil is now about to narrate.<sup>14</sup> Both these poems and the *Odusia*, whose authors were Rome's first tragedians as well as Rome's first epicists, may well have been imbued in tragic tropes, especially when dealing with the sufferings of war, or the fear inspired by the enemy. If we accept the suggestion that the model they may have drawn upon for the description of their Carthaginian enemies was the fifth-century Athenian model of the Persian barbarians and their allegories, we come to understand why Aeschylus' *Persae* can be used as a paradigmatic text for the reconstruction of the

<sup>10</sup> Conway (1931a) 25, Duckworth (1957) 1–2.

<sup>11</sup> See Lyne (1987), where tragedy becomes the elected vehicle for Virgil's 'further', pessimistic voice. On the unhooking of Virgil's pessimistic voice from an anti-Augustan perspective see the Introduction, pp. 10–11, with Kennedy (1992) and Giusti (2016c).

<sup>12</sup> Conte (2007) 23–57, esp. 51.

<sup>13</sup> Conte (2007), 150–69, esp. 160–1.

<sup>14</sup> See especially Leigh (2010), Goldschmidt (2013) 109–15, Biggs (2014).

portrait of the barbarian in the Roman as well as in the Greek tradition.

The storm scene which opens the *Aeneid* (*A.* 1.34–222) and introduces us to the territory and narrative of Carthage (presented, as I shall show in [Chapter 4](#), as a forced diversion and digression from the teleological drive of the epic)<sup>15</sup> provides a useful start for identifying some of the characteristics of Virgil's text that I have mentioned above. In a text whose patent and 'constitutive'<sup>16</sup> model is the storm of *Odyssey* 5 (*Od.* 5.263–493),<sup>17</sup> we can nonetheless already witness the striking profusion and blending of Greek and Roman epic and tragic sources, since we know from both Servius Danielis and Macrobius that the tempest of Book 1 was based, thematically, on a similar tempest in Naevius' first book of his *Bellum Punicum*.<sup>18</sup> Linguistically, however, Servius Danielis has also preserved the clear influence on Virgil of a tragedy by Pacuvius, the *Teucer*, which probably started with Teucer's narration of the storm that attacked his fleet after his departure from Troy.<sup>19</sup> As we shall see below, the myth of Ajax's brother, a myth which was certainly connected in fifth-century Athens with the propaganda that ensued after the Persian Wars, was apparently popular in Republican theatre, and plays an important part in the interactions between Trojans and Carthaginians in the *Aeneid*.

Although we have no way of tracing the characteristics, let alone the intertexts, of the storms contained in Naevius' *Bellum Punicum* and Pacuvius' *Teucer*, the opening scene of the *Aeneid* seems to anticipate the same anti-barbarian imagery that will be used more subtly, but extensively, in the presentation of Carthage and her queen in the course of Books 1 and 4. Indeed, the storm of *Aeneid* 1 has famously been noted by Philip Hardie in *Cosmos and Imperium* to be chock-full of

<sup>15</sup> See [Chapter 4.2](#).

<sup>16</sup> See Conte (2007) 40 on the difference between Homer and any other predecessor in the *Aeneid*.

<sup>17</sup> See above all Knauer (1964) 148–77.

<sup>18</sup> See p. 219.

<sup>19</sup> See [n. 190](#) in this chapter.



Gigantomachic imagery.<sup>20</sup> Typhonomachy, which was used, as we have seen,<sup>21</sup> in Pindar's first Pythian Ode as an allegory for the Greek victory over Carthaginians, Etruscans and Persians, also appears in the display of the Gigantomachic forces of Aeolus' winds at Juno's request in the storm of *Aeneid* 1 (50–156). Typhoeus is a tornado god (cf. the Greek τυφώς, τυφῶν<sup>22</sup>) and originator of the ill winds (Hes. *Th.* 869–80);<sup>23</sup> as 'personification of the elemental forces imprisoned in a particular place on the earth',<sup>24</sup> he is located under Aetna by Pindar and Aeschylus<sup>25</sup> (very close to where Aeneas and his comrades are: *A.* 1.34 *uix e conspectu Siculae telluris*, 'hardly out of sight of the Sicilian land'), and he is Hera's son according to some versions of the myth.<sup>26</sup> His eastern connotations, probably as early as Homer,<sup>27</sup> associate him first with southern Asia Minor and later with Egypt, therefore providing a fitting point of contact between the Typhonomachic winds of *Aeneid* 1 and the Egyptian forces of Cleopatra displayed on Aeneas' shield towards the close of *Aeneid* 8. Similarities between this 'military storm' (see *A.* 1.82 *uenti uelut agmine facto*, 'the winds, as if in armed array') and the battle of Actium, both 'envisaged as repetitions of the primitive struggles between the Olympian gods and monstrous opponents',<sup>28</sup> prompt a reading of the passage as an anticipation or an *a posteriori* comment on a precise event from recent history: from this point of view, the *seditio* to which it is explicitly compared (*A.* 1.149) points to civil war, and not just to *any* civil war. However, if recent historical events are undoubtedly the most immediate preoccupation of the poet, the allegories and symbols he chooses nonetheless share an ancient pedigree. It is tempting to

<sup>20</sup> Hardie (1986) 90–7.

<sup>21</sup> See p. 58.

<sup>22</sup> Though probably not the real etymology, see M. L. West (1966) 381.

<sup>23</sup> Hardie (1986) 94 sees him alluded to at *A.* 1.132 *tantane uos generis tenuit fiducia uestri?*, 'has such a confidence in your origin taken hold of you?'

<sup>24</sup> M. L. West (1966) 381.

<sup>25</sup> Pind. *Ol.* 4.6; *Pyth.* 1.17–20; fr. 92; Aesch. *PV* 365.

<sup>26</sup> *Hymn. Ap.* 305–55; Stes. fr. 239 Page.

<sup>27</sup> Who located him εἰν Ἀρίοις (*Il.* 2.783), see M. L. West (1966) 250–1 and 379–80.

<sup>28</sup> Hardie (1986) 110.

endorse Hardie's revival of the suggestion that the presence of Minerva on Aeneas' shield (*A.* 8.699) is reminiscent of Phidias' statue of Athena Parthenos in the Parthenon,<sup>29</sup> and worth remembering that Xerxes had been represented by Aeschylus with strongly Gigantomachic traits, reminiscent both of the Hundred Handers (*Pers.* 83 πολύχειρ) and of the Hesiodic Typhoeus (*Pers.* 81–2 κυάνεον δ' ὄμμασι λεύσσων | φονίου δέργμα δράκοντος, 'with his eyes flashing with the dark glance of a deadly dragon')<sup>30</sup> in a tragedy where 'the word "barbarian" seemed inextricably linked to the ideas of violence, disproportion, transgression and chaos'.<sup>31</sup> The model of the Persian Wars as 'wars against barbarians', the earthly counterpart of the Olympians' resistance to their monstrous foes, establishes a link between the Punic Wars and Actium that ennoble the wars of the Romans and at the same time disguises the unnatural character of a conflict which was actually intestine.

Στάσις, in fact, is also the term employed by Aeschylus in his allegorical description of the Persian Wars from a Persian – or, more precisely, from Atossa's – point of view, an 'internal strife' (*Pers.* 188) that springs between two women who are not only emphatically similar, but explicitly 'sisters of the same stock' (*Pers.* 185–6 κασιγνήτα γένους | ταυτοῦ). Virgil's intimations of a brother–sister relationship between Dido and Aeneas, implicit in their respective comparison with Diana (1.498–504) and Apollo (4.143–50),<sup>32</sup> together with the constant emphasis on the similarity of their characters, stories and cities, not only reminds us of a war against an East that was not really East, just as (Phrygian) Romans were not really western, but may have its roots in ancient

<sup>29</sup> Hardie (1986) 99.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Hes. *Th.* 824–7 ἐκ δε οἱ ὤμων | ἦν ἑκατὸν κεφαλαὶ ὄφιος δεινοῖο δράκοντος, | γλώσσησι δνοφερῇσι λελιχμότες; ἐκ δέ οἱ ὄσσων | θεσπεσίης κεφαλῇσι ὑπ' ὀφρύσι πῦρ ἀμάρυσσεν, 'from his shoulders there were a hundred heads of a snake, a terrible dragon's, licking with their dark tongues; and on his prodigious heads fire sparkled from his eyes under the eyebrows', with Moreau (1985) 148–50 and Saïd (2007) 78. It is worth noting that these traits are also shared by the Phoenician Cadmus, see Saïd (2002) 96–7.

<sup>31</sup> Moreau (1985) 114, translated from the French.

<sup>32</sup> Already noticed by DServius *ad* 4.144; see Hardie (2006).

reflections on the Punic Wars, partly in imitation of the tragic presentation of the Persian Wars, and partly because Rome and Carthage were felt to be parallel rising powers in the Mediterranean.<sup>33</sup> Without denying the acknowledged primacy of Cleopatra's Egypt as the 'historical model' for Dido's Carthage, it should be emphasised that many of the features that Virgil attributes to the city are to be found in the imagery of Persians once the Greek process of 'othering' had taken place on the Athenian tragic stage in one of the earliest attestations of 'Orientalism'.<sup>34</sup> Aeschylus' *Persae*, if considered as a 'paradigmatic model' for the eastern connotations of Carthage, adds further significance to Virgil's use of tragedy in regard to his presentation of the Roman 'other'.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, it allows the Parthian threat to emerge, reminding us of the Parthian engraved as put to flight but not yet subjugated on the famous frieze of the *Georgics*' theatre-temple (*G.* 3.31) – a figure representative of the nation that in Augustan times would come to any Roman mind upon the slightest mention of 'the East'.<sup>36</sup>

Therefore the first two sections of this chapter analyse the portrait of Virgil's Carthaginians as Persian barbarians, focusing first on the *Aeneid*'s reception of the *Persae* and secondly on Medea as a barbarian and specifically Persian model for Dido. As discussed in [Chapter 1](#), the calamitous loss of almost the whole of early Latin poetry (not to mention visual representations from the period) makes it very hard to reconstruct the process of the creation of a stereotypical image of Carthage, whose presentation as Rome's national enemy in the propagandistic terms of the Republic must have

<sup>33</sup> As testified by Timaeus' synchronisation of their foundings in 814/813 BCE (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.74.1 = *FGrH* 566 F 60) or by Eratosthenes' juxtaposition of their political systems (Strabo 1.4.9).

<sup>34</sup> Cartledge (1993) 39; Said (1978) 56–7 singles out Aeschylus' *Persae* and Euripides' *Bacchae* as the earliest examples of orientalist literature.

<sup>35</sup> And perhaps a new dimension to Virgil's relationship to Aeschylus to add to the discussion by Hardie (1991).

<sup>36</sup> See Thomas (1988) 45: 'When Augustan poets think of the East, their minds inevitably settle on Parthia.' On barbarians in the *Georgics*' theatre-temple see Giusti (forthcoming).

necessarily been very far from a purely ethnographic inquiry. Whereas some significant contributions have looked for and emphasised the Punic characteristics of Dido,<sup>37</sup> no attempt has yet been made at inquiring whether those features were in turn at least partially constructed on those of traditional enemies who could have worked as prototypes of 'the other'. For example, many features allow us to count Virgil's Carthage among the ancient literary examples of 'Orientalism': luxury, wealth, lust and effeminacy shape the city as representative of the conquest of the male West over the feminised East. Such characteristics have long been read as alluding to Augustus' recent conquest of Cleopatra's Egypt, but Republican texts, and especially the *Poenulus*, testify that eastern connotations were applied to Carthage already in the aftermath of the Hannibalic War. From one point of view, this can be partially explained by emphasising the image of Carthage as a Phoenician colony, a fact that undoubtedly makes it originally eastern, and a Roman match for the Athenian imagery of Thebes.<sup>38</sup> However, since this is the period when Romans were simultaneously struggling to mould their own national identity in terms of 'similarity *but* difference' from that of the Greeks, the Greek model may also have had a hand in shaping the connotations of an enemy whose existence aimed at fostering a common feeling of national identity, as had happened with the exemplary birth of the *Hellene* during the Persian Wars.

Finally, in parallel with my previous discussion of polarity and analogy in Plautus' *Poenulus*,<sup>39</sup> the last section is dedicated to the deconstruction of the barbarian polarisations that I have previously set up, and will investigate the dissolution of the West vs. East polarisation in the *Aeneid*, where both

<sup>37</sup> Horsfall (1973–4), Hexter (1992), Schiesaro (2008); on a different line of interpretation, see also Cadotte (2006) on the syncretism between Greek/Roman and Punic gods: Cadotte (2006) 273 shows Dido's sacrifice at *A.* 4.58–9 as addressed to Liber/Shadrapha, Apollo/Eshmoun and Juno/Tanit, with Ceres also being a major cult goddess for the Carthaginians.

<sup>38</sup> See Hardie (1990).

<sup>39</sup> Chapter 1.5.

Carthaginians and Romans are simultaneously represented as Greeks *and* barbarians, and are also equated to each other. On the one hand, I shall stress the traditional traits of such an equation, emphasising Virgil's debt to Euripides' *Bacchae*, a text that had already staged the dissolution of the Greek *vs.* barbarian polarity, and suggesting that Virgil in part faces problems of which his Latin predecessors had also been aware. On the other hand, however, I shall be careful not to underestimate the specific resonance of this collapse of the polarity in the Augustan age, in which analogies between Carthaginians and Romans are also to be linked with that traumatic loss of a national and cultural identity that had been recently experienced in the friends/enemies confusion that ensued after the Civil Wars.

## 2.2 Persian Carthaginians

### 2.2.1 *First Encounters*

Persians are present, paradigmatically speaking, from the very beginning of the *Aeneid's* narrative, which already resonates with Greek tragic models. Carthage, as the first subject of this narrative, is presented to us as enclosed within two passages that bear close resemblances to Euripidean prologues<sup>40</sup> and that are introduced through features broadly comparable to those of Aeschylus' *Persians*:

urbs antiqua fuit (Tyrī tenuere coloni)  
Karthago, Italiam contra Tiberinaque longe  
ostia, diues opum studiisque asperrima belli,  
quam Iuno fertur terris magis omnibus unam  
posthabita coluisse Samo.

(*A.* 1.12–16)

<sup>40</sup> These are the proem (with the notion of Juno's anger paralleled by Eur. *Bacch.* 6–9) and Juno's speech at *A.* 1.37–49 (similar to that of Poseidon at the beginning of the *Troades*): see Fernandelli (1996a), Mac Góráin (2013) 129–30. Cf. also the prologue-like quality of Venus' retelling of Dido's story at *A.* 1.338–68, with E. L. Harrison (1972–3) and (1989) 7, Hardie (1997) 322, 324.

## Persian Carthaginians

There was an ancient city, held by Tyrian settlers: Carthage, opposing Italy and the mouth of the Tiber from afar, rich in resources, ruthless and eager of war. This one city, they say, Juno loved more than any other land, even more than Samos.

From its very presentation, Carthage is the ‘other’, the Enemy with a capital E, and a mirroring one at that. As an *urbs*, and a colony founded by eastern settlers, it finds its definition in relation to the previously mentioned ‘lofty Rome’ (1.7 *altae ... Romae*), which is still a long way from being founded. And the type of relation is as analogical as it is oppositional. At 1.13–14, the arch-enmity and military opposition between the two is concealed in the form of a geographic observation, which is uncannily similar to that which describes the Persian expedition against Europe, ‘the neighbouring land on the opposite side of the strait’ (*Pers.* 66 εἰς ἀντίπορον γείτονα χώραν),<sup>41</sup> and seems to associate Punic and Persian Wars through the image of a huge clash of continents, which are on the opposite side of one another (*contra*),<sup>42</sup> but at a significant geographical and ideological distance (*longe*). The passage evokes directly the kind of transformation of the landscape of war already presented by Ennius in his *Annales*, where the waters between Italy and Libya became an ideological double, so I argued, of the Hellespont that separates Europe from Asia (*Ann.* fr. 302 Sk. *Europam Libyamque rapax ubi diuidit unda*, ‘where the rapacious waves divide Europe from Libya’).<sup>43</sup> Moreover, by envisaging from the start Carthage’s actions in terms of an attack ‘towards’ Italy (acc. *Italiam*), the preposition *contra* also anticipates the direction and content of Dido’s prophetic curse (4.628–9 *litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas ... arma armis*, ‘shores against shores, waters against waters ... arms against arms’).

At 1.12, Carthage is presented as ancient (*antiqua*) – but this is deceptive in terms of the *Aeneid*’s narrative (since we will

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Eur. *Med.* 210 Ἑλλάδ’ ἐς ἀντίπορον.

<sup>42</sup> The preposition *contra* surely encapsulates arch-enmity (see already DServius *ad* 1.13), but the conviction that Rome geographically faced Carthage should not be underestimated: see Korenjak (2004).

<sup>43</sup> See p. 62.

soon find out that the city is currently still rising), and even more so in the light of the traditional dates of myth, according to which the colony was only founded in 814 BCE, that is 370 years after the fall of Troy in 1184 BCE. The beginning of the narrative, the 'once upon a time' of the *Aeneid*, thus tosses readers onto the fiction of myth, and the threshold of history, at a time when *VRBS* did not yet straightforwardly mean Rome, but could no longer spell Troy either. The 'city that once was' is not, to readers' surprise, the one abandoned in the opening line (1.1 *Troiae ... ab oris* 'from the shores of Troy'), which would with good reason be termed *antiqua* (Troy as well as its stock: 1.375 *Troia antiqua*, 1.626 *antiqua Teucrorum a stirpe*, 2.137 *patriam antiquam*) and is indeed 'no more' at the time of the narrative (cf. 2.363 *urbs antiqua ruit*, 3.11 *campos ubi Troia fuit*, 4.311–12 *si ... Troia antiqua maneret*). Instead, it is surprisingly one which is still under construction, and whose name actually means 'new city' (Phoenician *Qart hadašt*, an etymology hinted at at 1.298 and 366, *nouae Karthaginis*).<sup>44</sup> This deceitful application of antiquity draws Carthage close to western representations of the East, first of all Troy and Egypt, but also Persia, made awe-inspiring and fearful by the remoteness of her empire, as emphasised in the *parodos* of the *Persae* by the detail of 'the ancient ramparts of Kissia' (Aesch. *Pers.* 17 τὸ παλαιὸν Κίσσιον ἔρκος).<sup>45</sup> The acknowledgement of this temporal 'deception', together with the link established between Carthage and Troy, prompts an indirect reflection on the mirroring rapport between Carthage and Rome, on the relative youth of both cities and on the consequences that the synchronisation of Dido's and Aeneas' voyages will have for Timaeus' synchronisation of the cities' respective foundations: Carthage has now been made *antiqua* only in relation to

<sup>44</sup> Servius *ad* 1.366 (= Liv. fr. 6 W-M): 'Carthago est lingua Poenorum *noua ciuitas*, ut docet Liuius,' 'Carthage is Punic for "New City", as Livy tells us.'

<sup>45</sup> See also the reference to Egyptian Thebes (37–8 ὠγγίους Θήβας), with Garvie (2009) 45. According to Herodotus (Hdt. 3.91.4, 5.49.7), Kissia is not a city, but a region of Susiana within which Susa was situated. Aeschylus might here refer to Susa itself (according to Strabo 15.3.2, he described Kissia as the founder of Susa), although both E. Hall (1996) 108 and Garvie (2009) 55 consider it unlikely.

the not yet founded Rome. Like Rome, the city is occupied by eastern *coloni*, whose origin from Tyre makes it an anti-Roman construction which is a double for the anti-Athenian Thebes, founded by Tyrian (or Sidonian) Cadmus<sup>46</sup> and the customary locus for tragedy, otherness and barbarism in terms that are made by Euripides in *Bacchae* strongly reminiscent of the Persian Wars.<sup>47</sup>

If thus far Carthage has mostly been defined in terms of its relationship to Rome, the next line contains an epigrammatic description of the city (14 *diues opum studiisque asperima belli*) that matches directly the barbarian pairing of luxury and military aggressiveness found in Xerxes' 'golden army' from the beginning of the *Persae*: πολυχρύσου στρατιᾶς (9). The importance of this adjective (πολύχρυσος) is emphasised by its constant repetition in the *parodos* (3–4 ἀφνεῶν καὶ πολυχρύσων | ἐδράνων, 45 πολυχρυσοὶ Σάρδεις, 52–3 Βαβυλῶν δ' | ἡ πολυχρυσος, noticeably the only instances of the term in Aeschylus' work). The Persian empire is wealthy, and gold is the material symbol of this wealth, which 'glitters even in the ancestry of Xerxes'<sup>48</sup> (80 χρυσογόνου<sup>49</sup> γενεᾶς) through the figure of Perseus, born from Danae and Zeus as golden shower. Xerxes' royal status is stressed from the *parodos* (5 ἄναξ Ξέρξης βασιλεύς, 24 βασιλῆς βασιλέως ὑποχοι μέγαλου) and repeatedly recalled throughout a play whose main aim is to set up a polarisation between Greek democracy and barbarian tyranny.<sup>50</sup> As a corollary to this emphasis on eastern luxury, Edith Hall has emphasised how Aeschylus' *Persae* strongly contributes to display 'the feminisation of Asia in the Greek imagination' and 'the metaphorical means by which Athenian thought conceptualised its victory over the Persians as an analogue of the male domination of women',<sup>51</sup> not only through the decision

<sup>46</sup> See Hardie (1990) 228–9.

<sup>47</sup> See Saïd (2002) 96–7.

<sup>48</sup> Saïd (2007) 74.

<sup>49</sup> *u.l.* χρυσονόμου.

<sup>50</sup> See Podlecki (1986) 78–9, Goldhill (2002), E. Hall (1989) 2, 16, 97, T. Harrison (2000) 76–91.

<sup>51</sup> E. Hall (1993) 109–10.



to make Atossa the protagonist of the play, allowing 'defeated, distant Asia to speak in a female voice',<sup>52</sup> but also through the repeated lamentation on Susa's *kenandria*, 'emptiness of men'<sup>53</sup> (118, 166, 289, 730; see also 298, 349, 920–1). Such polarisations of the Greek vs. barbarian ideology – democracy vs. tyranny, *andreia* vs. femininity, sobriety vs. luxury (χλιδή, ἄβρότης) – which aim at providing natural, genetic reasons<sup>54</sup> for the victory of Greece in the Persian Wars, are simultaneously counterbalanced by the apparently opposite attitude of elevating the enemy and its dangerousness in order to extol the victory of the West: hence the long and threatening overview of the Persian army at the opening of Aeschylus' play (1–64). Here, accompanied by the rhythm of marching anapaests, which contribute to create the effect of a real military expedition on stage, the contingents and commanders who followed Xerxes' expedition are presented with constant emphasis on the fear that they inspire: they are 'terrifying to look upon and formidable in battle' (27 φοβεροὶ μὲν ἰδεῖν, δεινοὶ δὲ μάχην), 'a fearsome incalculable horde' (40 δεινοὶ πληθὸς τ' ἀνάρητοι), 'a terrifying sight to behold' (48 φοβερὰν ὄψιν προσιδέσθαι); their nature as 'annihilators of cities' is even inscribed in their name (65–6 *περσέπολις* ... βασιλείος στρατός, 'the city-sacking army of the king').<sup>55</sup>

A similar blend of passive luxurious femininity and male military aggressiveness is found in Virgil's Carthage. Even though readers will have to wait until *A.* 1.340 before being properly introduced to Dido (first mentioned, almost casually, at 1.299), the feminisation of a city subjected to an Asiatic queen is already hinted at in its presentation under the domain of a female goddess who is first of all *regina* (9 *regina deum*, 46 *dium* ... *regina*, 443 *regia Iuno*), and only then *soror*

<sup>52</sup> E. Hall (1993) 121.

<sup>53</sup> E. Hall (1993) 117–18, T. Harrison (2000) 66–75, Bachvarova-Dutsch (2016).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. the geographical reasons given for proving the superiority of Greeks over barbarians in Aristotle (*Politics* 1327<sup>b</sup>29–32) or Hippocrates (*Airs Waters Places* ch. 16), with Cartledge (1993) 39–40.

<sup>55</sup> The pun between *πέρθω* ('to sack') and *Πέρσαι* is recommended by Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 3.1412<sup>b</sup>2).

and *coniunx* (47) of her Trojan-supporter male counterpart, Jupiter. Dido's royal status is continuously stressed throughout Book I,<sup>56</sup> and the banquet scene explicitly emphasises its luxury,<sup>57</sup> making her a double not only of Cleopatra but also of Atossa, a 'paradigmatic' Asiatic queen, whose dreams are, as we shall soon see, quite equally troubled. Dido, however, is not only a *regina* but the *dux* (I.364 *dux femina facti*<sup>58</sup>) of a people who own 'ferocious hearts', *ferocia corda* (I.302–3), and her Punic features, as threatening as Hannibal's,<sup>59</sup> need to be taken into account together with the fragility inherent in the female nature of both her person and her reign.

### 2.2.2 Symbolic Affinities

This same blend of passive luxurious amenability and male military aggressiveness is also found in the two symbols with which Carthage is associated at Aeneas' arrival: the bees and the horse. First, the apparently peaceful and alluring image of the bees to which the Carthaginians are compared in a famous simile (*A.* I.430–6) is disturbed by the insertion of an ominous military reference reminiscent of Aeolus' winds (I.434 *agmine facto*, 'in martial array', taking up I.82 *ac uenti uelut agmine facto*).<sup>60</sup> A similar double connotation is applied to the feminised Persians—μέλισσαι of Aeschylus' play in the first of only three similes in the *Persae*:

παῖς γὰρ ἱππηλάτας καὶ πεδοστιβῆς λεῶς  
σμήνος ὥς ἐκέλοιπεν μελισσᾶν ξὺν ὀρχάμῳ στρατοῦ  
(*Pers.* 126–9)

For all the cavalry and the infantry, like a swarm of bees, have left the hive with their army's leader

<sup>56</sup> *A.* I.303 *regina*, 340 *regit*, 389 *reginae*, 454 *reginam*, 496 *regina*, 522 *regina*, 594 *reginam*, 631–2 *regia* ... *tecta*, 660 *reginam*, 674 *reginam*, 686 *regalis* ... *mensas*, 697 *regina*, 717 *reginam*, 728 *regina*.

<sup>57</sup> See *A.* I.697–8, 728–9.

<sup>58</sup> For the ambiguity of *Dido dux et Troianus* at 4.124 and 165 see Hardie (2006) 29; on Dido's 'transgender' features see G. S. West (1980).

<sup>59</sup> See Horsfall (1973–4), Syed (2005) 143–62 and Schiesaro (2008).

<sup>60</sup> On the military and threatening connotations of this bee simile see Giusti (2014a).

This Homeric-style simile provides a 'variation on the *πλῆθος* theme',<sup>61</sup> the aim of which was, as we have seen (*Pers.* 40), to emphasise the ominous threat of the Persian army. The military connotations of the simile are taken up from the Homeric bee similes of the Greek army gathered in an assembly after Agamemnon's dream (*Il.* 2.87–93) and of Polypoites and Leonteus standing at the gates of the encampment (*Il.* 12.164–72). The maleness of this bee army following his king bee *ὄρχαμος*, Xerxes, is underlined by juxtaposition to the preceding and following passages which give voice to the female mourning of Susa, soon to become *κένανδρον*, 'emptied of men' (118), resting on the cries of a 'crowd of women' (123 *γυναικοπλήθης ὄμιλος*), a recurrent theme of the tragedy. However, recognition that the ancients were not all unaware of the actual sex of the bee leader<sup>62</sup> and the connections between the gender of the Greek *μέλισσα* and the repeated female qualities of these oriental enemies may allow us to consider Susa as metaphorically *κένανδρον* from the very start. This is all the more true for Virgil's Carthage, whose bee simile also closely associates its inhabitants with Apollonius' Lemnian women gathering around the Argonauts like bees clustering around flowers (*Arg.* 1.879–85).<sup>63</sup> At the death of its queen bee,<sup>64</sup> the Carthaginian palace will be 'shivering with lamentation, sobbing and womanly howling' (*A.* 4.667–8 *lamentis gemituque et femineo ululatu | tecta fremunt*), an image reminiscent of the beginning of Aeschylus' play, where wives seem to 'howl' for their men (*Pers.* 13 νέον δ' ἄνδρα βαῦζει, a verb which literally means to say 'bow wow', 'to bark like a dog'<sup>65</sup>).

If Virgil's bee simile hides threatening military connotations under an overtly peaceful and alluring symbol, the next animal to which the city is connected seems to reverse these very

<sup>61</sup> Garvie (2009) 90.

<sup>62</sup> See Hudson-Williams (1935).

<sup>63</sup> On the erotic connotations of this simile, which 'intimates the success that the Lemnian women have had in their plan: like the bees, they have found a source for rejuvenating their population', see Clauss (1993) 142; on similarities between the episode of the Lemnian women and *Aeneid* 4, Nelis (2001) 112–17.

<sup>64</sup> See Grant (1969).

<sup>65</sup> See Garvie (1999) 26–8 and (2009) 53 for the reconstruction of this corrupted passage: he poses a lacuna after the verb in which the 'yearning wife' would appear as the subject.

connotations while providing yet another possible connection to the Persians. After Aeneas has entered the city and ‘mingled with the men’ (1.440), we are informed that Carthage was founded on the site where the Tyrians had dug up a horse’s head, a *signum* indicated to them by Juno (1.441–5). Legend had it<sup>66</sup> that the Tyrians first dug up the head of an ox, symbolising the fertility of the land but also subjugation, and therefore decided to dig somewhere else, until they found a horse’s head, a positive sign, since ‘this animal, even though it can be subjugated, is nonetheless warlike’ (Serv. *ad A.* 1.443 *hoc animal licet subiugetur, bellicosum tamen est*). Therefore, according to Servius, ‘Carthage is warlike for the horse’s sign, and fertile for the ox’s’ (*bellicosa est Carthago per equi omen, et fertilis per bouis*). The horse was traditionally associated with Carthage, whose ancient name, *Kakkabé*, was thought to be the indigenous, either Punic or Libyan, for ‘horse’s head’,<sup>67</sup> and whose foundation legend is testified from the fourth century onwards by Siculo-Punic coinage,<sup>68</sup> probably minted for Punic armies on military campaign. On these coins, the image of a horse, or of a horse’s head, is accompanied on the reverse by the palm tree next to which the Tyrians had dug:<sup>69</sup> φοῖνιξ, a symbol of victory etymologically reminiscent of their Phoenician origin and possibly lurking in Virgil’s ‘delightfully umbriferous grove’ (*lucus ... laetissimus umbrae*, 441).

The ominously aggressive military connotations of the horse are undeniably explicit, but Servius’ notion that this animal can be subjugated (*licet subiugetur*) should not be dismissed. Such a notion might indeed be present in Juno’s ambiguous oracular speech, where it is predicted that the Carthaginians are to become outstanding in war and rich in substance, but by no means undefeatable:

sic nam fore bello  
egregiam et *facilem* uictu per saecula gentem.

(A. 1.444–5)

<sup>66</sup> Servius *ad A.* 1.443, Justinus 18.5.15–16, Eust. *ad Dion. Per.* 195.

<sup>67</sup> Eust. *ad Dion. Per.* 195.

<sup>68</sup> See Bayet (1941) and Prag (2011).

<sup>69</sup> See Eust. *ad Dion. Per.* 195.

... so that they would be a race glorious in war, and *easy to sustain* for centuries.

The difficulty of this line, inherent in the interpretation not only of *uictu* (either ablative of *uictus*, or supine of *uiuere* or active/passive supine of *uincere*), but also of *facilis*, has been spotted by commentators, who have proposed different solutions, the most commonly accepted being 'finding no difficulties in nourishment', with *uictu* as ablative of *uictus*.<sup>70</sup> Juno's oracle would therefore be an inverted and varietal repetition of *diues opum studiisque asperrima belli*, a pair which in the meantime has also been applied to the opposite Italian soil where Rome is to be founded (1.531 *terra antiqua, potens armis atque ubere glabrae*, 'an ancient land, powerful in arms and in the richness of its soil'). However, I endorse Kraggerud's intriguing suggestion that the phrase contains a *Zweideutigkeit* similar to Dido's *urbem quam statuo, uestra est*, 'the city that I am founding is yours' (1.573), which would deliberately allude to the eventual subjugation of Carthage through the undoubtedly available reading of *facilem uictu* as 'easy to conquer'.<sup>71</sup> However, it is undeniable that the notion that Carthaginians were 'easy to conquer' is strange, if not downright absurd.<sup>72</sup> The solution to this prophetic and linguistic riddle may be the one proposed by Rory Egan, according to whom the supine *uictu* should be read simultaneously in the active and passive voice.<sup>73</sup> If this is the case, behind the reference to Carthage's proverbial wealth, Juno's prophecy would also hint at the extraordinary parabola of the Carthaginians in the Hannibalic War, from their victory at Cannae up to their defeat at Zama, a surprising shift also highlighted by Livy in his introduction to the war (Liv. 21.1.2 *et adeo uaria fortuna belli ancepsque Mars fuit ut*

<sup>70</sup> See Austin (1971) 153. Henry (1873) 675–86 proposed 'easily satisfied in its nourishment', relying on Sen. *Ep.* 90.13 *sapiens uictu facilis*.

<sup>71</sup> See Kraggerud (1963) 36.

<sup>72</sup> E. L. Harrison (1985) 134: 'We must surely reject Kraggerud's strange notion that the phrase is deliberately ambiguous ... who could ever entertain the notion that the Carthaginians would prove "easy to conquer"?'

<sup>73</sup> Egan (1998).

*propius periculum fuerint qui uicerunt*, ‘and so variable was the fortune of war and the outcome so uncertain that those who ultimately conquered had actually been closer to ruin’). More generally, the phrase would indicate that ‘the nation that will be pre-eminent in war will come, in the long run, to be receptive of both victory and defeat’.<sup>74</sup>

The double active/passive meaning of *uictu* matches directly the symbolism of the warlike but tamable horse as described by Servius, all the more so since the adjective *facilis*, when used in relation to animals, indicates that these are ‘obedient’, ‘tame’, ‘tractable’.<sup>75</sup> If the ambiguity of Juno’s prophecy hides a reference to the rise and fall of Carthage, it is also inscribed within the use of the city’s destiny as a cautionary mirror for Rome, a topic that we have already seen, but will be discussed more closely in [Chapter 4](#). Regardless of the precise meaning of *facilem uictu*, the passage is already in a mirroring rapport with Rome, since it closely anticipates a similar prophecy on the Romans contained in the first book of the second half of the epic:

huic progeniem uirtute futuram  
egregiam et totum quae uiribus occupet orbem

(A. 7.257–8)

... from here a future stock, glorious in war, will occupy the whole  
world with its forces

And yet it is telling that this future stock is glorious in ‘virtue’ rather than ‘war,’ and destined to ‘occupy the whole world’, ideally forever rather than ‘for centuries’.<sup>76</sup> While it will settle, as we have seen, on a land similarly ‘powerful in arms and in the richness of the soil’ (A. 1.531), it will also found its city on the site where a head will be dug up<sup>77</sup> – only, this time it will be a human head, symbol of absolute power and world sovereignty: Liv. 1.55.6 *quae uisa species haud per ambages*

<sup>74</sup> Egan (1998) 204.

<sup>75</sup> OLD s.v. *facilis* 9d.

<sup>76</sup> On two opposing visions of history in the *Aeneid* regarding the eternity of Rome see [Chapter 4.5.3](#).

<sup>77</sup> The Capitoline Hill: Liv. 1.55; Pl. NH 28.15; Serv. ad A. 8.345.

*arcem eam imperii caputque rerum fore portendebat*, 'this portent plainly foreshadowed that here was to be the citadel of the empire and the head of the world'.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, according to the respective foundation prodigies, it is not surprising, and perhaps even 'easy', that this people 'kings of a great empire' and 'proudly superior in war' should 'come forth for the destruction of Libya':<sup>79</sup>

progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci  
audierat Tyrias olim quae uerteret arces;  
hinc populum late regem belloque superbum  
uenturum excidio Libyae; sic uoluere Parcas.

(*A.* 1. 19–22)

But she had heard, in fact, that from Trojan blood a race was rising, which would one day overthrow the Tyrian citadels; and from here a people, kings of a great empire and proudly superior in war, would come forth for the destruction of Libya; so the Fates had spun.

The sign of the horse, though no doubt an assurance of war and military valour,<sup>80</sup> also seems to prophesy subjugation in the long run. Furthermore, readers of the *Georgics* may remember the horses that, in direct opposition to the immortal and asexual life of the bees in Book 4, were prey to love and death in Book 3. The image of the horse right after the bees might serve the purpose of foreshadowing Dido's submission to love and her dramatic fall from chaste *dux* of her people to maddened 'adulterous' queen, from the enchanted and politically perfect society of *Georgics* 4 to the furious, lascivious animals of *Georgics* 3, to which her nocturnal delirium will later be allusively compared (see the echo of *G.* 3.243–4 *et genus aequoreum, pecudes pictaeque uolucres*, | *in furias ignemque ruunt*, 'and the race of the sea, and flocks, and colourful birds, all ruin in fury and fire', in *A.* 4.525 *cum tacet omnis ager, pecudes pictaeque uolucres*, 'when all fields are silent, the flocks and the colourful birds').<sup>81</sup>

<sup>78</sup> See Brisson (1969), Ogilvie (1965) 211–12.

<sup>79</sup> See Piccaluga (1983).

<sup>80</sup> Cf. the omen of the four horses on Italian soil, portending war and triumph (*A.* 3.540–3).

<sup>81</sup> See Grant (1969), Leach (1979).

The double symbolism of the horse, fierce and docile, has a long pedigree, and functions in exactly the same prophetic way in Aeschylus' *Persae*, where horses are quite prominent, and manifest the military boldness of the Persians as much as they foreshadow their ultimate defeat. They connect not only to the defining role of Darius' horse in his election to the kingship,<sup>82</sup> but also to the Persians' worship of the Sun, with the horse as its sacred animal.<sup>83</sup> Horses are constantly present in the *parodos* (*Pers.* 14, 18, 26, 29, 32, 105, 126) and implicit in the yoke metaphor, the first (50) and 'dominant metaphor of the play',<sup>84</sup> which finds its vividness and concreteness (179 ἐναργές) in Atossa's narration of her dream (181–99). Here *stasis* arises between two women who, belonging to the same stock and identical to each other except for their clothing, have been destined to occupy the Greek and the barbarian land respectively. Xerxes tries to restrain them by yoking them to his chariot, but, whereas one of them 'towered up proudly for this harness, and kept her jaw submissively to the bit' (193–4 χῆ μὲν τῇδ' ἐπυργούτο στολῇ | ἐν ἡνίασί τ' εἶχεν εὐαρκτον στόμα), the other 'began to struggle, tore the harness from the chariot with her hands, dragged it violently along without bridle or bit, and smashed the yoke in half' (194–6 ἡ δ' ἐσφάδαζε, καὶ χεροῖν ἔντη δίφρου | διασπαράσσει, καὶ ξυναρπάζει βία | ἄνευ χαλινῶν, καὶ ζυγὸν θραύει μέσον). Xerxes falls out of the chariot, Darius appears to console him, but the son starts tearing his own robes as soon as he sees him.

Atossa's dream turns into vivid images the same yoke metaphors exploited by the chorus in the *parodos*: not only does it prophesy the failure of Xerxes' plan to 'impose a yoke of slavery on Greece' (50 ζυγὸν ἀμφιβαλεῖν δούλιον Ἑλλάδι), it also transfers the image of the Persian woman 'yoked alone' (137 μονόζυξ) after the departure of her partner to the whole of the Persian empire. The double nature of the horse is here exploited in order to emphasise the 'Greek freedom vs. barbarian slavery'

<sup>82</sup> Hdt. 3.84–8.

<sup>83</sup> Just. 1.10.5.

<sup>84</sup> Garvie (2009) 66.



polarisation that runs throughout the play (cf. the barbarians at 24 βασιλῆς βασιλέως ὑποχοι μέγαλου, 'kings subordinate to the great king', and the Greeks at 242 οὔτινος δοῦλοι κέκληνται φωτὸς οὐδ' ὑπήκοοι, 'they are not called slaves or subjects to any man'), and that is all the more stressed by the indication of a strong similarity and even kinship between the two people. The symbol of the horse, with which the Persian army is associated in the *parodos* for its aggressive and warlike nature, and which is there supposed to bolster their confidence in the success of the expedition, is paradoxically also used to represent the slavish nature that is at the root of their failure. As soon as Atossa perceives this other side of the coin, the horse, so emblematic of her late husband, opens the door of national nightmares.

### 2.2.3 *Polygamous and Incestuous Bonds*

Atossa's dream, far from being a mere literary allegory, may have other implications of a psychologically interpretable nature which can cast light on the intimate relationships between the main characters of the play (Atossa, Darius and Xerxes) and yield further stereotypical characteristics of these eastern barbarians. In a play that disguises its national character by focusing on the tragedy of a small family unit, the interactions between the three main characters are based on a twofold sexual tension that is never solved. Atossa, a woman yoked alone and left behind, as protagonist of the play embodies all Persia: death separates her from her husband, and the encounter with her son will never be staged. Her dream, while giving voice to the 'Phaethontian' realisation that her son will never match his father in controlling the 'chariot of the state', also serves to equate these two male figures and express what George Devereux has recognised as a classic 'counter-Oedipal, Jocasta complex'.<sup>85</sup>

To sum up Devereux's main arguments, the image of 'yoking together' (συζεύγνυμι), commonly used to denote

<sup>85</sup> Devereux (1976) 1–23.

monogamous Greek marriage, has been translated by Aeschylus into Persian polygamous terms: Atossa's dreaming of Xerxes' yoking of two sisters to his chariot would be strongly reminiscent of her having 'actually twice been a "yoke fellow" of one of her sisters',<sup>86</sup> since she had to share her first husband (and brother) Cambyzes II with an unnamed sister (Hdt. 3.31) and her third, Darius, with another sister, Artystone (Hdt. 3.88), whereas her second husband, a usurper who pretended to be her other brother Smerdis, was also polygamous (Hdt. 3.68). In the dream, Atossa projects her Jocasta-urges on her son, who is represented in a more than 'Phaethontian', in fact an Oedipal, rivalry with his father. The *stasis* between the two women must stand for Atossa's inner conflict between her Jocasta-impulses and the rejection of them, a conflict that would fit the character of a woman who had already been queen by incest three times.

Whatever doubts scholars may have on the methodological validity of Devereux's 'ethno-psycho-analytical' interpretations of dreams in Greek tragedy, it is tempting to sense unresolved sexual tension between Atossa and her son throughout the play, especially in connection with the actual, or supposed,<sup>87</sup> customs of the Persians. In fact, whereas Herodotus indicates Cambyzes II as the initiator of the brother-sister(s) marriage (3.31), this custom was probably already common in ancient oriental royal houses, and the Achaemenid period also includes significant examples of parent-child marriages.<sup>88</sup> Allusions to brother-sister incestuous tensions in Aeneas and

<sup>86</sup> Devereux (1976) 18.

<sup>87</sup> Walter Scheidel (1996) 9, in introducing his analysis of the (historically proved) brother-sister marriage in Roman Egypt, emphasises the fact that 'were it not for the unequivocal evidence provided by official census returns surviving on scraps of papyrus ... it would probably be dismissed by many modern historians as an unfounded *topos*, malevolent slander, or a curious misunderstanding of an exclusively royal custom' and encourages further investigation on the marriage practices of ancient Iranians (on which he provides an appendix: 166-7), hopefully to be treated in a future project on 'brother-sister and parent-child marriage in pre-modern societies' (see [www.stanford.edu/~scheidel/incest.htm](http://www.stanford.edu/~scheidel/incest.htm)).

<sup>88</sup> Artaxerxes and one (or two) daughters (Plut. *Art.* 23.3-4), the satrap Sisimithres and his mother (Curt. 8.2.19); Xanthus of Lydia (*FGrHist* 765 F 31) also knew that the Magians lived together with their mothers; see Asheri (1990) 248.

Dido's relationship, already conjectured by Servius, have been convincingly linked by Philip Hardie to Ptolemaic relationships in the overall presentation of Carthage as a double for Egyptian Alexandria.<sup>89</sup> Incestuous tensions in the Carthaginian episode, however, work in more than one direction, and are presented in forms that are not straightforwardly matched by the Ptolemaic model. In fact, there are acknowledged allusions to polygamy in the love triangle of Aeneas, Dido and her sister Anna,<sup>90</sup> and Aeneas' encounter with his disguised Diana-like mother, modelled not only on Odysseus' meeting with Nausicaa but more disquietingly on Venus' seduction of Anchises in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*,<sup>91</sup> offers 'a kind of preview of Dido'<sup>92</sup> which concerns not only the forthcoming Diana simile, but, more poignantly, the queen's strong Jocasta- and Phaedra-like impulses towards both her lover and his son.<sup>93</sup> Such references to polygamy and mother-son incest would require, if recognised, a different orientalisising model, since no tradition of parent-child marriage is attested in Ptolemaic Egypt,<sup>94</sup> whereas polygamy, if at first practised in accordance with Egyptian custom, seems to have eventually subsided in favour of Greek monogamous marriage.<sup>95</sup>

The prologue to Dido's tragedy (*A.* 1.335–71), delivered by Venus still in the disguised shape of a potential lover, is therefore already inserted in a frame that reverberates with incestuous and disturbing sexual tensions, and tells a story strongly reminiscent of the murderous intrigues of ancient oriental royal houses:

<sup>89</sup> Hardie (2006).

<sup>90</sup> *A.* 4.421–3 *solam nam perfidus ille | te colere, arcanos etiam tibi credere sensus; | sola uiri mollis aditus et tempora noras*, 'you were the only one that that wicked man paid attention to, and he even entrusted to you his most secret feelings; only you knew the sweet ways to approach him, and the right times', see Servius *ad A.* 4.682: *Varro ait non Didonem sed Annam amore Aeneae impulsam se supra rogum interemisse*, 'Varro claims that it was not Dido but Anna who died on the pyre because of Aeneas' love rejection'; see Pease (1935) 350–1.

<sup>91</sup> See Reckford (1996), Syed (2005) 59.

<sup>92</sup> Oliensis (1997) 306.

<sup>93</sup> See Oliensis (1997) 205–6 and (2001) 51, Hardie (1997) 322.

<sup>94</sup> And even the evidence for the Pharaonic period has not gone unquestioned: see Middleton (1962).

<sup>95</sup> Clarysse-Thompson (2006.11) 297–300.

## Persian Carthaginians

imperium Dido Tyria regit urbe profecta,  
 germanum fugiens. longa est iniuria, longae  
 ambages; sed summa sequar fastigia rerum.  
 huic coniunx Sychaeus erat, ditissimus auri  
 Phoenicum, et magno miserae dilectus amore,  
 cui pater intactam dederat primisque iugarat  
 ominibus. sed regna Tyri germanus habebat  
 Pygmalion, scelere ante alios immanior omnis.  
 quos inter medius uenit furor. ille Sychaeum  
 impius ante aras atque auri caecus amore  
 clam ferro incautum superat, securus amorum  
 germanae; factumque diu celauit et aegram  
 multa malus simulans uana spe lusit amantem.

(A. 1.340–52)

Dido is the ruler here, who came from the city of Tyre to escape her brother. The story of this injustice is long and winding, but I shall tell you the main facts. She was married to Sychaeus, the wealthiest of the Phoenicians, and he was loved greatly by the poor girl, to whom he had been betrothed by her father when she was still a virgin and blessed for the first time with wedding omens. But her brother ruled Tyre, Pygmalion, the most abominable of criminals. And between the two men came furious conflict. Her sacrilegious brother, in front of the altars, and blinded by his lust for gold, killed Sychaeus with the sword, secretly, catching him off guard, and indifferent to his sister's loves. And he concealed the crime for a long time, that evil man, and kept deceiving the poor lover with false hopes and fancy pretenses.

When introducing us to the background story of Queen Dido, Venus herself prefaces that there would be much more to say (1.341–2) or, in other words, much to conceal. Even though the venal motivation of Pygmalion's action is explicitly clear, the story's emphasis on love (344 *amore*, 350 *amorum*, 352 *amantem*) alongside gold (343 *auri*,<sup>96</sup> 359 *auri*, 363 *auro*), and their reunion in the motive of the crime (349 *auri* ... *amore*) seems to suggest that Pygmalion's tragic action might have been set in motion by more than one engine: he kills Sychaeus 'indifferent to his sister's loves',<sup>97</sup> (350–1 *securus amorum* | *germanae*) but he

<sup>96</sup> *u.l. agri*.

<sup>97</sup> *securus* in a similar sense recurs at 10.326; see Austin (1971) 128–9.

is also 'confident'<sup>98</sup> of them, and Venus is intimating that these loves will be more than one, and that the 'yoking to'<sup>99</sup> (345 *iugarat*) Sychaeus was just 'the first' (345–6 *primis ... omini-bus*). Further allusion to Dido's imminent second union may be spotted in the description of Pygmalion's deception of his love-sick sister in lines 351–2, where the elegiac vocabulary of love-sickness (*aegram ... amantem*), simulation (*multa ... simulans*), false hope (*uana spe*), gratuitous deception (*lusit*) and perfidy (*malus*) uncannily suits not just the description of a counterfeit lover in general, but of Aeneas in *Aeneid* 4 in particular. Moreover, if we did not know from line 341 that Pygmalion is Dido's brother, the story could be read as a brotherly strife for kingship: Sychaeus – whose name might be Virgil's invention (according to Servius, a variation for 'Sicarbas') and whose identification with Elissa's uncle-husband Acherbas (Just. 18.4.3) is nowhere indicated<sup>100</sup> – was *ditissimus auri*, 'however' (*sed*), 'the brother kept the reign' (346).

This eastern palace tragedy matches closely the nightmares through which Atossa suffered. Like the Persian queen, Dido will later understand, trapped in her nightmares, that she is also a woman 'yoked alone' and abandoned (*Pers.* 137 λείπεται μονόζυξ) in her empty, κένανδρον, Asiatic land (4.466–8 *semperque relinqui | sola sibi, semper longam in-comitata uidetur | ire uiam et Tyrios deserta quaerere terra*, 'she seems always abandoned, alone to herself, always treading a long road with no company, and looking for Tyrian people in desert lands'), and not even the ghost of her dead husband, recalled through rituals at his tomb like Darius by Atossa, will suffice to console her (4.457–61 *fuit in tectis de marmore templum | coniugis antiqui, miro quod honore colebat, | uelleribus niueis et festa fronde reuinctum: | hinc exaudiri uoces et uerba uocantis | uisa uiri ...* 'in the palace was a marbled shrine for her previous husband, a shrine that she honoured and revered greatly, decorated with snowy fleeces and festive garlands: from here, she

<sup>98</sup> *OLD* s.v. *securus* 3.

<sup>99</sup> The verb is so metaphorically exploited in Latin literature only from Catullus 64 onwards (21 *tum Thetidi pater ipse iugandum Pelea sensit*).

<sup>100</sup> See Pease (1935) 103–4.

thought she heard the voice and the words of her husband calling out to her ...’ cf. Atossa at *Pers.* 598–851). The nightmares that trouble her sleep not only involve disturbing mother–son relationships, but also feature cousins, brothers (4.469 *Pentheus*, 471 *Orestes*) and duplicity (470 *solem geminum ... duplices Thebas*), following the recognition of Aeneas’ preference for her sister Anna (420–3); an acknowledgement that surely involves feelings similar to those of Atossa, whose sister, Artystone, was ‘the wife that Darius loved most’ (Hdt. 7.69).

The story of Dido presents itself as a variation of explicitly incestuous murder tales such as those in which Atossa featured: her first husband and brother, Cambyses II, had killed their brother Smerdis for fear that he would replace him in kingship (Hdt. 3.30) and married both their sisters (Hdt. 3.31), one of whom was later murdered for remembering the dead brother to him (Hdt. 3.32). Like Dido, Atossa seems to have been deceived for a while about the death of Smerdis, since she was married to a man, ‘the fake Smerdis’, who pretended to be him – although, since she ‘surely knew her own brother’ (Hdt. 3.68), she was probably privy to the truth. As the wife of Darius, Atossa was already a woman turned into a *dux* by the vicissitudes of life, but she was also to become a second Helen,<sup>101</sup> ready to carry the *aition* of the outbreak of the Persian Wars (Hdt. 3.134). Both Atossa’s and Dido’s assimilation to Helen<sup>102</sup> point to the recognition of their stories as aetiological *fabulae* for the outbreak of international conflicts which are all envisaged in the form of a huge clash of continents, and represent these women as the pivot around which myth, history and politics rotate.

### 2.3 Persian Dido: The Medea Intertext

Helen and Atossa, both models for Dido, are not the only Greek examples of women made responsible for the outbreak

<sup>101</sup> Asheri (1990) 344.

<sup>102</sup> Hinted at in the Diana simile through the mention of the Eurotas (*A.* 1.498), on whose shores Helen was kidnapped, and made explicit by Iarbas in his identification of Aeneas with Paris (4.215); see Krummen (2004) 33–42.

of international conflicts. The abduction of Medea in the fourth book of Apollonius' *Argonautica* is an episode similarly shaped in terms of a conflict between West and East, and it exploits both the Trojan and the Persian Wars as a recurrent theme and an exemplary model.<sup>103</sup> The *Argonautica* is, in its turn, a widely recognised major model for the *Aeneid*, especially as regards the Carthaginian episode and the character of Dido, and its influence on the *Aeneid* was analysed at length by Damien Nelis in 2001.<sup>104</sup> In particular, Virgil owes to Apollonius his peculiar treatment of time, where the blending of myth and history that foregrounds Aeneas' linear story prompted Mack's description of the time of the *Aeneid* as 'almost circular, like a globe spun before us, which we view from varying points'.<sup>105</sup> On the one hand, the *Aeneid* shares with the Homeric poems an 'overt imposition by the poet of an all-encompassing vision and control'<sup>106</sup> which has no place in Apollonius' epic, yet on the other the treatment of time in the *Argonautica*, with its continuous interest in aetiology as a link between present and past and its more or less covert political hints at the Ptolemaic context,<sup>107</sup> provided a far more apt model for an epic in which instances of political propaganda are embedded. In addition, the manner in which the *Aeneid* resembles Athenian tragedy in its treatment of time,<sup>108</sup> especially in terms of the blending of myth and history, has a partial pedigree in the tragic modality of Apollonius' Medea episode. As Hunter points out, not only is Medea's 'catastrophic aftermath', as staged by Euripides,

<sup>103</sup> See Clauss (2000) 27–8; Hunter (1993) 67, 159–60 and (2015) 4, 109.

<sup>104</sup> Nelis (2001). The fact that the Medea episode in the *Argonautica* is the primary model for the Dido episode was already recognised by ancient commentators: see Serv. ad A. 4.1 *totus hic liber translatus est de tertio Apollonii*, 'this book has been wholly adapted from the third book of Apollonius', and Macr. Sat. 5.17.4 *de Argonauticorum quarto, quorum scriptor est Apollonius, librum Aeneidos suae quartum totum paene formauerit, ad Didonem uel Aenean amatoriam incontinentiam Medae circa Iasonem transferendo*, 'he shaped almost the whole of the fourth book of the *Aeneid* on the fourth book of Apollonius' *Argonautica*, transferring to Dido or to Aeneas the unrestrained libido of Medea towards Jason'.

<sup>105</sup> Mack (1978) 4. On Apollonius' use of time see Fusillo (1985).

<sup>106</sup> Hunter (1993) 172.

<sup>107</sup> See Hunter (1993) 161.

<sup>108</sup> See Mack (1978) 3 and Segal (1981) 70.

‘always in our minds’,<sup>109</sup> but ‘it has long been observed that the extensive debt of *Arg.* 3 to Attic tragedy must have been very influential in the shaping of *Aen.* 4 as a tragedy’.<sup>110</sup> The presence of Euripides’ Medea in both Apollonius’ Medea and Virgil’s Dido was already recognised here and there by commentators on Book 4,<sup>111</sup> but its paramount importance for our understanding of both Dido’s ‘psychology’ and Carthaginian imagery in the *Aeneid* was scarcely emphasised before Alessandro Schiesaro,<sup>112</sup> who rightly challenges future scholars to take into account all the other extant Medeas, ‘both ascendants and descendants’:<sup>113</sup> not only Euripides’ and Apollonius’, but also Ennius’, Ovid’s, Seneca’s, Hosidius Geta’s and Dracontius’.

Both Nelis’ and Schiesaro’s arguments can be supplemented by a more politically oriented understanding of Virgil’s exploitation of Medea for the construction of his Dido. The role of both the Helen and Medea models for Dido in shaping the Carthaginian episode as the historical *aition* for a conflict which is similarly envisaged as a clash between two continents has been left surprisingly underdeveloped. It should be stressed that there is more than one Medea: the wandering heroine *par excellence*<sup>114</sup> (as such, a perfect model for Dido, whose etymology seems to derive from the semitic root for ‘to wander’<sup>115</sup>) is connected to more than one city through her different mythological episodes. In order to understand the influence of the Medea intertext on Dido, there are at least three Medeas to take into account: the Colchian, the Corinthian and the Athenian, the last of which will eventually become the Persian. All three of them seem to have appeared on the mid-Republican stage, where Medea had become a distinctly

<sup>109</sup> Hunter (1993) 48, cf. Hunter (1989) 18–19.

<sup>110</sup> Hunter (1993) 182 n. 46.

<sup>111</sup> ‘At least since La Cerda’, Schiesaro (2008) 223.

<sup>112</sup> Schiesaro (2005a) and (2008).

<sup>113</sup> Schiesaro (2008) 222.

<sup>114</sup> Referred to by the nurse of Ennius’ *Medea Exul* as *era errans*: see Jocelyn (1967) 113–18, 355.

<sup>115</sup> An etymology given by Timaeus (fr. 82 Jacoby = 23 Müller); see Hexter (1992) 348, Schiesaro (2008) 198 n. 248.



popular symbol for foreignness and otherness: the Apollonian/Colchian Medea by Accius in his *Medea siue Argonautae*, the Euripidean/Corinthian by Ennius in his *Medea Exul* and the Athenian/Persian by Pacuvius in the *Medus*, and perhaps by Ennius too in another tragedy on Medea in Athens.<sup>116</sup>

Because only a few fragments survive from these plays, it is difficult to ascertain their influence on the Dido episode in the *Aeneid*. We can, however, at least reconstruct their plots. In what follows, I shall briefly touch on Colchis, Corinth, Athens and finally reach Persia, in order to argue that all these stories and lands shed light on the political aspects of Virgil's use of the Medea intertext for Dido.

### 2.3.1 Colchian Medea

Virgil's debt to *Argonautica* 3 and 4 in *Aeneid* 4 is large and significant both in terms of content and narrative strategies. Comparisons between the two stories proceed from general considerations (the shaping of both Medea and Dido as victims of Eros/Cupid, the symptoms of the *mal d'amour*, the common model of Ariadne foreshadowing future abandonment) to closer readings of similar scenes (the meetings in the temples of Hecate and Juno, the marriage in a cave, the confession to a sister, 'hunting imagery' displayed in the development of erotic madness), up to Virgil's borrowing of Apollonian expressions, the most famous of them *improbe Amor* (*A.* 4.412), a translation of Apollonius' σχέτλι' Ἔρως (*Arg.* 4.445).<sup>117</sup> Overall, despite the uncertainty as to whether Naevius was a mediator in this modelling, the importance attributed to Eros can safely be considered an original feature of Apollonius' epic, and 'the role played by the Dido episode in Vergil's epic must be seen as a direct reaction to Apollonius' experiment'.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>116</sup> See p. 70 n. 193.

<sup>117</sup> See also Medea referring to Jason as σχέτλιος at *Arg.* 4.376 and Dido to Aeneas as *improbe* at *A.* 4.386, with Schiesaro (2008) 100; *A.* 4.322–3 *extinctus pudor et ... fama prior* and *Arg.* 3.785–6 ἔρρετο αἰδώς, | ἔρρετο ἀγλαΐη; *A.* 4.66–7 *est mollis flamma medullas* | *interea et tacitum uiuit sub pectore uulnus* and *Arg.* 3.286–7 βέλος δ' ἔνεδαίετο κοῦρη | νέρθεν ὑπὸ κραδίῃ φλογὶ εἴκελον, with Nelis (2001) 131; *A.* 4.168 *summoque ulularunt uertice Nymphae* and *Arg.* 3.1218–19 αἱ δ' ὀλόλυσαν | Νύμφαι.

<sup>118</sup> Nelis (2001) 185.

At the same time, however, the second half of Apollonius' epic corresponds more closely to the second half of Virgil's poem, as heralded by the explicit quotation from Apollonius' 'proemio al mezzo' at the hinge of the *Aeneid*.<sup>119</sup> This 'motto' directly connects the landing at Latium with that in Colchis, thus creating a menacing predecessor (Aietes) for Latinus<sup>120</sup> and setting up an entangled matrix of lands which are all linked to each other through similarities and differences. Apollonius' Colchis, as model for both Carthage and Latium, links Carthage and Latium as two war zones for the Trojan proto-Romans, but also as two potential new homes with two potential brides for Aeneas. And yet, just as Dido in *Aeneid* I is a double for Alcinous as well as for Nausicaa, she is not just another Medea but also, in her role as oriental monarch, another Aietes. As noted by Richard Moorton, *A.* 1.297–304, the passage in which Jupiter sends Mercury to placate the fierceness of the Tyrians (*ferocia ... corda*, 302–3) seems partially modelled on *Arg.* 3.584–8, where we find out that Aietes has similarly been made hospitable to Phrixus only by Zeus' intervention via Hermes,<sup>121</sup> and there are further structural and thematic similarities between the scenes of Aeneas' first audience with Dido at *A.* 1.495–632 and Jason's first audience with Aietes at *Arg.* 3.210–438.<sup>122</sup> The whole description of Dido's *famulae* and *ministri* setting up the royal feast at *A.* 1.701–8 is reminiscent of Apollonius' description of Aietes' δμῶες busy obeying their lord (*Arg.* 3.271–4), a passage that seems to underline the contrast between Jason's and Aietes' 'modes of leadership', a fundamental theme for the whole Colchian episode.<sup>123</sup> As Moorton puts it, the parallel with the Colchian king warns us of Dido's 'intense and potentially turbulent

<sup>119</sup> Cf. *A.* 7.37 *nunc age, qui reges, Erato, quae tempora, rerum ...* and *Arg.* 3.1 *Εἰ δ' ἄγε νῦν, Ἑρατώ, παρά θ' ἵστασο καὶ μοι ἐνίσπε ...* with Nelis (2000) 89 and (2001) 267–8.

<sup>120</sup> Though Nelis (2000) 89 thinks that it is Turnus who works as a double for Aietes.

<sup>121</sup> Moorton (1989) 48–9.

<sup>122</sup> Moorton (1989) 52.

<sup>123</sup> See in particular *Arg.* 3.273–4 οὐδέ τις ἦεν | ὃς καμάτου μεθίσκεν ὑποδρήσων βασιλῆϊ, 'and there was no one who was slacking from toil in serving the king', and Clauss (2000) 27.

personality':<sup>124</sup> Aietes' 'royal' arrogance and attachment to power is stressed throughout Apollonius' description,<sup>125</sup> and his aggressive reaction to the Argonauts' request is already forecast in Jason's speech at the end of Book 2.<sup>126</sup> Aietes' desire to burn the Argo (*Arg.* 3.580–3), later taken up at *Arg.* 4.391–3 by a Medea who, 'in her anger ... is her father's daughter',<sup>127</sup> seems to match Dido's hidden plans in *Aeneid* 4, as perfectly understood by Mercury (*A.* 4.566–8 *iam mare turbare trabibus saevasque uidebis | concludere faces, iam feruere litora flammis, | si te his attigerit terris Aurora morantem*, 'you will see her ships churning the sea and deadly torches blazing, and the shore seething with flames, if only dawn will find you still lingering in this land').<sup>128</sup>

Aietes, who can be considered as Apollonius' inversion of the friendly Phaeacians of Homer, is not only one of the many models of Virgil's Dido, but a particularly interesting one in view of his similarities to the Persians, especially with regards to his mode of leadership.<sup>129</sup> Such similarities will reappear later in Book 4 in the description of the men in the Colchian army and fleet, which are as innumerable as leaves and birds (*Arg.* 4.214–17 and 238–9), a comparison that evokes directly the *parodos* of the *Persae*.<sup>130</sup> Thus the recognition of Apollonius' Colchis as a model for Virgil's Carthage already turns Medea

<sup>124</sup> Moorton (1989) 53.

<sup>125</sup> See for example *Arg.* 3.375–6 οὐδ' ἐπὶ κῶας, | σκῆπτρα δὲ καὶ τιμὴν βασιλῆϊδα δεῦρο νέεσθε, 'you did not come here for the fleece, but for my sceptre, and the glory of the throne'.

<sup>126</sup> *Arg.* 2.1279–80 εἴτ' οὖν μελὶχίη πειρησόμεθ' Αἰήταο, | εἴτε καὶ ἀλλοίη τις ἐπὶ βόλος ἔσσεται ὀρμῇ, 'if we shall approach Aietes with courtesy, or if some other approach will be effective'.

<sup>127</sup> Hunter (1993) 61.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. *A.* 4.604–6 *faces in castra tulissem | implemque foros flammis natumque patremque | cum genere extinxem, memet super ipsa dedissem*, 'I should have taken torches to his camp and filled the decks of his ships with flames, killing the son with the father so as to wipe out the whole race, and then throw myself in the fire.'

<sup>129</sup> Clauss (2000) 27.

<sup>130</sup> According to Paduano–Fusillo (1986), the model of the Persian Wars is evoked only to be ironically rejected, see p. 569: 'L'opposizione militare tra pochi e molti discende da un passo iliadico (13, 738–739); ma è a proposito delle guerre persiane, in Eschilo e poi nella pubblicistica ateniese del IV secolo, che diviene, grazie al suo paradossale esito bellico, emblematica dell'ideale eroico: un ideale al quale nelle *Argonautiche* si rinuncia esplicitamente, mettendo in rilievo che l'esito di una tale battaglia sarebbe quello prevedibile e "ragionevole".'

into an intertext that is not only literary, but specifically and pointedly political.

### 2.3.2 *Corinthian Medea*

The Euripidean/Corinthian Medea is an active presence in Apollonius' Medea, since her subsequent tragic story must be in the mind of any reader of the *Argonautica*. Hence the ominous presence of this tragic Medea surfaces in Virgil not only via direct allusion to Euripides, but also through the Apollonian filter. For example, Virgil's decision to set the meeting between Aeneas and Dido in the temple of Juno must be reminiscent of the meeting of Jason and Medea in the temple of Hecate (*Arg.* 3.915–1145, a scene 'rewritten' by Ovid at *Met.* 7.74–99), all the more so in view of the Dido–Diana simile (*A.* 1.498–504) as a match for Apollonius' Medea–Artemis simile (*Arg.* 3.876–86), with both sharing also an Odyssean model (*Od.* 6.102–8).<sup>131</sup> The presence of Hecate in this scene, a goddess 'linked in myth and cult, and sometimes synonymous' with Artemis<sup>132</sup> and one to which the figure of Dido will come closer and closer in the course of Book 4, ominously hints at Dido's future change of attitude towards the Trojans and at the threatening features that the tragic Medea intertext will raise. Yet the Virgilian setting of the scene in a temple of Juno also brings to mind Medea's connection to Hera Akraia,<sup>133</sup> in whose sanctuary her children will be buried at the end of Euripides' tragedy (*Eur. Med.* 1379), an ominous reminder and anticipation of a theme that will be further problematised by Medean echoes: that of Dido's absent offspring.

As Schiesaro argues in detail, direct allusions to Euripides' Medea can be found in more than one passage in Book 4 and 'add a significant layer of violence, irony and deception'<sup>134</sup> to the character of Dido. Her (Punic) associations with trickery are also shared with Medea, whose very name seems to

<sup>131</sup> See Nelis (2001) 82–6.

<sup>132</sup> Clauss (1997a) 166.

<sup>133</sup> On which see Johnston (1997).

<sup>134</sup> Schiesaro (2008) 226.

evoke the semantic spectrum of μήδομαι, which includes 'to think', 'to plot' and 'to treat with magic rites'.<sup>135</sup> The emphasised masculine features of Virgil's Dido additionally recall the 'archetypal' model of Clytemnestra, the woman with a 'male-planning heart' (Aesch. *Ag.* 11 γυναικὸς ἀνδρόβουλον ἐλπίζον κέαρ), the bad mother *par excellence*, of whom Medea 'can usefully be read as a revision or extension'.<sup>136</sup> Yet there is another version of the story that may be even more relevant to Dido: in Eumelus' *Corinthiaca* Medea travels to Greece because she has inherited the throne of Corinth, and 'Jason becomes king as her husband, through her'.<sup>137</sup> In Pausanias' description of the coffer of Cypselus, she is 'seated upon a throne, while Jason stands on her right and Aphrodite on the left' (Paus. 5.18.3 Μηδείας δὲ ἐπὶ θρόνου καθημένης Ἰάσων ἐν δεξιᾷ, τῇ δὲ Ἀφροδίτῃ παρέστηκε). To readers aware of this story, as well as reminiscent of Euripides' emphasis on the contrast between Medea's barbarism and Corinth's Greekness (see *Med.* 536–61; 591–2 and, in particular, Jason's claim that 'no Greek woman would have dared to do this', *Med.* 1339–40 οὐκ ἔστιν ἥτις τοῦτ' ἂν Ἑλληνίς γυνὴ | ἔτλη ποθε), the Medea intertext would resonate with echoes of unfairness for Dido, a queen who has been betrayed and scorned in her own city, and who has somehow been forced to give up her throne.

The grievance that makes Jason's betrayal unforgivable is, in Medea's eyes, his abandoning the woman who has given him offspring, and male offspring (*Med.* 488–91). This is an argument that Dido cannot use against Aeneas, as she is herself agonisingly aware when she cries out her complete misery in being abandoned *before* she can bear him a child (4.327–30).<sup>138</sup> This underscores the fact that one important function of the Medea intertext is undoubtedly that of raising the theme of the mysterious progeny of the Carthaginian queen: in sharp contrast with the genealogy of the Roman people as expounded

<sup>135</sup> See Schiesaro (2008) 82 n. 93.

<sup>136</sup> Mastronarde (2002) 8; cf. Boedeker (1997) 138.

<sup>137</sup> O'Higgins (1997) 120; cf. Graf (1997) 34–5.

<sup>138</sup> See Schiesaro (2005a) 89–90.

by Jupiter in Book 1, that of the Carthaginians is not just kept silent, but seems to be negated from the very beginning. Their foundation history starts with a queen who kills not only herself, but also her future offspring (why should readers or Tyrians be sure that Dido is not dying pregnant? Famously, Ovid's Dido will play on this idea, *Her.* 7.133–8<sup>139</sup>), and partially shares the infanticidal nature of Medea while refusing to provide a future offspring to her city, which therefore promises to fall apart (*A.* 4.669–71). The only possible offspring of this woman who “conceives” not a child, but *furias* (4.474),<sup>140</sup> will spring from her bones in order to avenge her (*A.* 4.625 *exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor*). In this text Hannibal, a purely historical character, is made an ἄλᾶστωρ, a vindictive demon through which Dido's own demon will reproduce<sup>141</sup> in order to threaten the Roman people unrelentingly and perpetually. The tragic nature of the epic text has thus contaminated Roman history.

### 2.3.3 Athenian/Persian Medea

As noted by Nelis, it would seem that Virgil looks simultaneously at Ennius' *Discordia* in *Annales* 7 and at Apollonius' Eros in *Argonautica* 3 for his description of the beginning of the war in Italy.<sup>142</sup> Given Ennius' probable familiarity with Apollonius, we may be dealing with a sort of ‘window reference’,<sup>143</sup> and Medea may have been a suitable model to use with reference to Rome's own barbarians already in Ennius, notably also a major tragedian and the author of one or two plays dedicated to Medea. What is at any rate highly likely is that Virgil knew and used Ennius' *Medea Exul* as a model for Dido, in view of verbal similarities between *Aeneid* 4 and the

<sup>139</sup> See Schiesaro (2005a) 93–4.

<sup>140</sup> Schiesaro (2008) 205–6.

<sup>141</sup> On Medea as a ‘reproductive demon’ see Johnston (1997) 65.

<sup>142</sup> Nelis (2000) 96.

<sup>143</sup> On the term ‘window reference’ see Thomas (1986). Note also that Baraz (2009) sees the Medea intertext at work again from *Aeneid* 7 onwards in relation to Lavinia and Amata.

scant extant fragments of this tragedy.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, it is possible that fr. 94 Manuwald (*asta atque Athenas anticum opulentum oppidum | contempla et templum Cereris ad laeuam aspice*, 'stop and admire the ancient and rich city of Athens and look at the temple of Ceres on the left') belonged to another *Medea* of Ennius, of which we know nothing except that it was set in Athens.

The story of the Athenian Medea, according to which she fled from Corinth to Athens in order to marry Aegeus but was then forced to leave because of her attempt to poison Theseus, is well attested.<sup>145</sup> However, it has been curiously neglected by Classical scholars, even though it is referred to in Euripides' *Medea* both at the very end of the play and in the so-called 'Aegeus Episode', whose importance still needs to be stressed in view of its 'central position ... further emphasized by its location in the almost exact centre of the play in terms of number of lines'.<sup>146</sup> Among the Latin sources, it was most certainly recounted by Pacuvius in his *Medus*, and further inserted by Ovid in the seventh book of his *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 7.404–25). The next episode of this story saw Medea fly to Persia and become the ancestor of the Persians/Medes, either in her own right (Eust. *ad Dion. Per.* 1017–20; Paus. 2.3.8) or through her son Medus (Diod. Sic. 4.55.5–56.2; 10.27; Hyg. *Fab.* 27 cf. also 26), a story first found in Herodotus:

ἐκαλέοντο δὲ πάλαι πρὸς πάντων Ἄριοι, ἀπικομένης δὲ Μηδείης τῆς Κολχίδος ἐξ Ἀθηνέων ἐς τοὺς Ἀρίους τούτους μετέβαλον καὶ οὗτοι τὸ οὔνομα.

(Hdt. 7.62)

<sup>144</sup> See Ennius *Med. Ex.* fr. 89 Manuwald *Medea animo aegro amore saeuo saucia: saucia*, the first epithet of Dido in Book 4 (*A.* 4.1), would stand for Euripides' ἐκπλαγεῖσα, while *saeuius*, an Ennian innovation (Jocelyn (1967) 365), reminds us of *A.* 4.532 *saeuit amor*. On Virgil and Ennius' *Medea Exul*, see Schiesaro (2008) 67, 72 n. 47, 84, 85 n. 104, 95 n. 167, 223–4. There are also verbal similarities between the opening lines of the *Medea Exul* and the Trojan Horse in *Aeneid* 2 (cf. Ennius *Med. Ex.* fr. 89 Manuwald *abiegna ... trabes* with *A.* 2.112 *trabibus contextus acernis* and Ennius *Med. Ex.* fr. 89 Manuwald *in ea delecti uiri* with *A.* 2.18 *delecta uirum ... corpora*).

<sup>145</sup> Schol. *ad Il.* L 741; Call. *Hecale* fr. 233 Pf.; Apoll. 1.9.28; Apoll. *Epit.* 1.5–6; Diod. Sic. 4.55.6; Ov. *Met.* 7.404–25; Plut. *Thes.* 12.2–3; Dion. Per. 1020–8; Paus. 2.3.8; Eust. *ad Dion. Per.* 1017–20; Mythogr. Vat. 48. See Sourvinou-Inwood (1979) 22–4.

<sup>146</sup> Dunkle (1969) 97.

These were in old time called by all men Arians, but when the Colchian woman Medea came from Athens among the Arians they changed their name, like the Persians.

According to Sourvinou-Inwood's hypothesis, the anonymous wicked stepmother of the *Theseid* was replaced by Medea in the fifth century in the form of a 'conscious manipulation of the legend aimed at transforming this myth into the mythological prefiguration of the conflict between Greece and Persia',<sup>147</sup> and the fifth-century representations of Theseus chasing a woman (perhaps Medea), which she analysed in her 1979 study, would represent the expulsion of the Persians from Greece, matching the more famous Centauromachies and Amazonomachies. The reasons for the choice of Medea as the protagonist of such a myth would rely on etymological connections (her name naturally connects to the Medes, and her maternal grandmother was called 'Perse' already at *Od.* 10.137–9<sup>148</sup>), on her eastern origins and perhaps on the happy coincidence that Marathon was both the origin of the bull seized by Theseus and the place that gave victory to the Athenians. It is inevitable that such a propagandistic myth would have been taken up in Athenian tragedies, and either Sophocles' or Euripides' *Aigeus* might have dealt with both Theseus' fight with the bull at Marathon and his expulsion of Medea in terms of the Athenian propaganda on the Persian Wars.<sup>149</sup> Furthermore, the suggestion would also help to understand the emphatic significance of the Aegeus episode at the very heart of Euripides' *Medea*.

If Ennius really did write an Athenian Medea, then the staging of Theseus' expulsion of the ancestor of the Medes from Greece may have resounded with ideological echoes of the Romans' expulsion of their own oriental barbarians from Italy on the tragic stage of the middle Republic, all the more so if we factor in the possibility that Medea may have influenced the representation of Dido already in Naevius'

<sup>147</sup> Sourvinou-Inwood (1979) 50, (1990) 413–14 and (1997) 260.

<sup>148</sup> See also Hecate's connection to Perse: *Arg.* 3.467, *Ov. Met.* 7.74 *Hecates Perseidos*.

<sup>149</sup> See Sourvinou-Inwood (1979) 56–8.



*Bellum Punicum*. Virgil's, or more probably Naevius',<sup>150</sup> 'conscious manipulation' of the myth of Dido in the invention of a meeting with Aeneas as an *aition* for the Punic Wars is a procedure that closely matches that of the Athenian Medea myth, a theme which is, in Clauss's view, present already in the *Argonautica* through specific Herodotean references.<sup>151</sup> If Virgil had Athenian propagandistic images and debates in mind, then allusions to these barbarian Carthaginians may start from the presence of an Amazonomachy on the frieze of the Carthaginian temple, whose final image of Penthesilea is a clear anticipation of Dido (*A.* 1.490–3), and would be further corroborated by possible echoes of Aeschylus' *Persae* and the model of Medea. The description of Aeneas, who has already been mapped onto Theseus through the model of the abandoned Ariadne, chasing Dido in her own dream, may not only remind readers of Atossa and the 'emptiness' of Aeschylus' Persia, but also owe something to the Athenian representation of Theseus chasing Medea and pushing her, also *incomitata*, to eastern lands:

agit ipse furentem  
in somnis ferus Aeneas, semperque relinqui  
sola sibi, semper longam incomitata uidetur  
ire uiam et Tyrios deserta quaerere terra ...

(*A.* 4.465–8)

In her dreams she is chased in her madness by fierce Aeneas; she seems always abandoned, alone to herself, always treading a long road with no company, and looking for Tyrian people in desert lands ...

The connections established with Atossa and Medea situate Dido in direct continuity with the 'Helen Model', and contribute to the suggestion that the ideology of the Punic Wars might have developed in continuity with the Athenian ideology of the Persian Wars. In the Augustan age, however, the Persian features of the Medea intertext for Dido, as well as the echoes of Euripides' *Bacchae* – a play which, according to Plutarch

<sup>150</sup> See pp. 215–16 n. 61.

<sup>151</sup> Clauss (2000) 27–8.

(*Crass.* 33), the Parthians had staged after the battle of Carrhae using Crassus' severed head as the severed head of Pentheus – also bring the Parthians into the picture, reminding us of the wars that Augustus should wage against foreign enemies, and warding off the danger of further civil war through the evocation of *metus hostilis*. Thus, the Persian–Carthaginian parallel bolsters a sense of Roman national identity *in continuity with* the Greeks, alongside the recognition of the Romans' superior military achievements, since they have managed to conquer and destroy Carthage, and must eventually conquer and destroy the new Persians, the Parthians.

### 2.4 Trojan Carthaginians

Mere difference is uninteresting;  
what is interesting is difference disguised as sameness.

Jay Reed<sup>152</sup>

#### 2.4.1 *Stasis*

So far I hope to have shown how Virgil's presentation of Carthage is in part constructed in terms of polarisation to Rome on the model of the barbarian Persian enemy. However, no matter how far we manage to stress their barbaric features, the Roman portrait of the Carthaginians is never as polarised as we might expect it to be. In all our extant sources, from Plautus' *Poenulus* to Livy's third decade, Virgil's *Aeneid* and Horace's *Epodes* and *Odes*, up to the *Punica* of Silius Italicus, there is a constant Romanness inherent in Carthage, as well as a sympathetic portrayal of the defeated enemy. The reasons for this may vary from one period to another, and in the Augustan period, as I have emphasised in the Introduction,<sup>153</sup> they are strongly connected to the fact that the civil conflict is always lurking behind the Punic Wars, following the Sallustian view according to which the crisis of the Republic, and the

<sup>152</sup> Reed (2007) 3.

<sup>153</sup> See [Introduction](#), pp. 4–6.

consequent Civil Wars, was triggered by the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE. This peculiarity of the Augustan mirroring with Carthage should never be underestimated, but the fact that a sympathetic portrayal of the Carthaginians dates back to an early Latin text such as Plautus' *Poenulus* indicates that other factors also need to be taken into serious consideration.

As Griffith has shown in response to Edith Hall's study, even the portrait of the Persians in Aeschylus' play is after all 'not as negative as we might have expected',<sup>154</sup> and the mirroring between Persians and Greeks in the play is best exemplified, as has been mentioned, by the notion that the two women who embody Greece and Persia in Atossa's dream are explicitly 'sisters of the same stock' (*Pers.* 185–6 κασιγνήτα γένους | ταῦτοῦ), since the Persians descend from Perseus, a Greek hero (*Pers.* 73–80) or, alternatively, from Medus, son of Medea and Aegeus.<sup>155</sup> Thus the Persian Wars are not only a πόλεμος, as would be expected, but surprisingly a στάσις, an 'internal strife' (*Pers.* 188). This mirroring with the Persians finds an immediate parallel in Herodotus' work, where it has been noticed that 'overtly negative, inhumane vignettes are almost always balanced by positive, humane ones'.<sup>156</sup> The reason for this must partly be found in Herodotus' own willingness to present an impartial and truthful portrait of these barbarians, but it is important to stress that a degree of mirroring is found in any presentation of the enemy, as an object which can be defined as an 'other' from the 'self' only in relation to the previous definition of the 'self'.<sup>157</sup>

I have already shown in [Chapter 1](#) how the case of Rome's creation of the Carthaginian 'national' enemy is peculiar within this usual pattern, specifically because of the intrusion of Greece into the picture, a 'cultural other' that competes with the 'military other' embodied by Carthage. When discussing

<sup>154</sup> Griffith (2007) 101. See also Gruen (2011) 10–11.

<sup>155</sup> See Garvie (2009) 117, Gruen (2011) 19–20.

<sup>156</sup> Raaflaub (2012) 19.

<sup>157</sup> On the Greek 'other' as a mirror image, see Hartog (1988), on the 'Mirror of the Enemy' more generally (with special focus on Renaissance Italian literature), see Moudarres (2011).

the middle Republic, we have seen that while Rome borrows the ‘strategies of polarisation’ from Greece in order to construct a stereotyped portrait of the Carthaginians in cultural continuity with that of the Persians in fifth-century Athens, the modelling is nowhere near so simple, since the Roman process of assimilation of Greek culture clearly coexists with an opposite process of differentiation from that same culture that the Romans were struggling to emulate: thus the Greeks rather than the Carthaginians figure the luxurious, lascivious, soft and effeminised easterners in comparison to the rough military prowess of Roman Republican culture. It is plausible to argue that it was such a ‘desire to be part of the Greek world and yet simultaneously distinct’<sup>158</sup> that made Trojan descent more appealing than the Greek to the Romans, so that eventually Aeneas beat Odysseus to become their mythical ancestor.<sup>159</sup> Famously, one of the first attestations of such descent is found in Greek rather than Roman propaganda: Pyrrhus, as the descendant of Achilles through Pyrrhus/Neoptolemus, recreates the Trojan War by waging war on ‘a colony of Trojans’ (Paus. 1.12.1).<sup>160</sup> Another episode attested shortly thereafter, the Segestans’ plea for help from Rome during the First Punic War on the basis of their common Trojan origin,<sup>161</sup> attests the conjunction and concomitance of the first military conflict against Rome’s yet-to-be national enemy with the simultaneous shaping of a national identity.

I have argued that Rome’s eventual fastening on the Trojans as national ancestors, precisely the symbol of the defeated Persians in fifth-century Athenian discourse, must indicate a strong degree of discontinuity and differentiation from the same culture that they also apparently struggled to emulate. In

<sup>158</sup> Erskine (2001) 145; see also Gruen (1992) 23–31. Clearly this is an extreme simplification of the matter on a collective scale: cf. Hölkeskamp (1999) on how different genealogies could serve different purposes for specific *gentes*.

<sup>159</sup> On the alternative traditions, see Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.72.2 (Aeneas founded Rome with Odysseus) and 1.72.5 (Romus, Anteias and Ardeias, founders of Rome, Antium and Ardea as sons of Odysseus and Circe).

<sup>160</sup> See Gruen (1992) 44.

<sup>161</sup> Cic. *Verr.* 2.4.72; 2.5.83, 125; Diod. 23.5; Plut. *Nic.* 1.3; Zon. 8.9.12. See Gruen (1992) 45 and Erskine (2001) 31, 40.

simple terms, the Romans accepted the status of 'barbarians of the West' which Pyrrhus among other Greeks had assigned to them: a status that Rome had to share with the equally sophisticated and equally barbarian polis of Carthage. In the Greek imagination, assimilation between the two cities was already operative: Timaeus had synchronised the respective dates of their foundations in 814/813 BCE,<sup>162</sup> and Eratosthenes had juxtaposed and compared their two political systems.<sup>163</sup>

The [previous chapter](#) has shown how Plautus' *Poenulus* displays a clear analogy, alongside a polarity, between the Romans and the Carthaginians. This section will argue that a similar mirroring with the Carthaginian enemy is found in Augustan texts, but that the connotations of such mirroring must necessarily be different in a period that is still under the spectre of Civil War. In Livy's third decade, although on a number of occasions there may be similarities between Carthaginians and Trojans, or even Carthaginians and Persians,<sup>164</sup> the Carthaginians are never referred to as *barbari*, in striking contrast to, for example, Spaniards, Gauls or Numidians.<sup>165</sup> At the very beginning of the decade, Hasdrubal is killed explicitly by a *barbarus* (Liv. 21.2.6), a detail which makes it clear from the start that Carthage itself cannot be given the label 'barbarian', and which fits very well in the overall presentation of the Punic city and its Senate as a double for Rome, with an anti-Barcid Carthaginian, Hanno, who assumes a Ciceronian rhetoric and role,<sup>166</sup> and an internal enemy of the city, Hannibal, whose description matches closely that of Catiline in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*.<sup>167</sup> In the second half of the decade, the similarities between Hannibal and Scipio come so much to the fore<sup>168</sup> as to make clear that these two generals are indeed two sides of the same coin (Liv. 30.30.12 *quod ego fui ad Trasimennum, ad Cannas, id tu hodie es*, 'what I was at Trasimene and Cannae,

<sup>162</sup> Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.74.1 = *FGrH* 566 F 60. See Feeney (2007) 53–4.

<sup>163</sup> Strabo 1.4.9.

<sup>164</sup> Levene (2010) 88–94.

<sup>165</sup> See the discussion in Levene (2010) 219–22.

<sup>166</sup> Walsh (1973) 126, Cipriani (1984) 67, 71, 73, Clauss (1997b) 174.

<sup>167</sup> But there are also echoes of Jugurtha (*BJ* 6.1 and 7.4–5): see [Introduction](#), p. 16.

<sup>168</sup> See A. Rossi (2004b).

you are today'), an observation which is equally applicable to the two cities that they embody.

This very brief outline of the mirroring between Rome and Carthage in Livy matches the treatment of the same issue in Virgil's *Aeneid*.<sup>169</sup> In both cases, the non-barbarian status of Carthage is specified by contrast to the ferocious and savage people that surround the city's territory (*A.* 4.39–43 *non uenit in mentem quorum consederis aruis? | hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello, | et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis; | hinc deserta siti regio lateque furentes | Barcaei*, 'don't you remember who dwells in these lands where you have settled? On the one side we are surrounded by the cities of the Gaetulians, a race invincible in war, and the Numidians, unbridled, and the inhospitable Syrtes; on the other side there is waterless desert and the fierce raiders from Barca'). This is in contrast to Dido's city, whose architecture is not only technologically advanced but also shows, from Aeneas' point of view, clear signs of humanity (the famous *sunt lacrimae rerum* at 1.462), and so appears to be extremely sophisticated and civilised. Like the city of Livy's third decade, the first apparition of Virgil's Carthage (*A.* 1.418–29) betrays uncanny signs of similarities to Rome, and also to the Augustan recolonisation of Carthage, the *Colonia Iulia Concordia Carthago*.<sup>170</sup> among them, notably, the presence of a 'sacred Senate' (1.426 *iura magistratusque legunt sanctumque senatum*, 'they draw up laws, and elect magistrates, and a sacred Senate').<sup>171</sup> In addition, the specification that the temple of Juno in Carthage was founded where a horse's head had been dug up (1.441–5) invites a direct link with the temple of Jupiter in Rome,<sup>172</sup> which was also

<sup>169</sup> On the mirroring between Carthage and Rome, Dido and Aeneas in the *Aeneid* see especially the discussion in Reed (2007) 73–100.

<sup>170</sup> See *EV* s.v. 'Cartagine' and E. L. Harrison (1984).

<sup>171</sup> Austin (1971) 148, following G. Williams, conjectured the occurrence of some 'early dislocation of the text'. The line was deleted by Heyne and Ribbeck, but retained by Mynors (1969) and more recently by Conte (2009).

<sup>172</sup> There is an obvious parallel between the Carthaginian grove and Romulus' *asylum*. The *asylum* too was found at the slope of a hill, traditionally *inter duos lucos* (Cic. *de diuin.* 2.40, Liv. 1.8.5, Dion. Hal. 2.15.4, Ov. *Fast.* 3.429, Vell. 1.8.5), which are compressed into one by Virgil (*A.* 8.342–3 *hinc lucum ingentem, quem Romulus acer asylum | rettulit*).

founded at the slope of a hill where a human head had been dug up, the *caput humanum* which gave the Capitoline hill its hallowed name.<sup>173</sup> The striking Romanness inherent in Virgil's Carthage finds final and definitive confirmation in Dido's famously ironical *urbem quam statuo, uestra est*, 'this city that I am founding is yours' (*A.* 1.573).

The similarities between Hannibal and Scipio in Livy also find a direct parallel in the well-recognised similarities between the two leaders of the first four books of the *Aeneid*. As Dido's own words testify (*A.* 1.628–9 *me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores | iactatam hac demum uoluit consistere terra*, 'I, too, was tossed by fortune through many and similar toils, until at last I have been allowed to settle in this land'), her exile story is a direct match for Aeneas', since they are both *duces* of their people (1.364 *dux femina facti*) who have been forced, under different circumstances, to depart from the East in order to found a western colony destined to outlast its mother city. The mirroring similes of Dido–Diana in Book 1 (1.498–504) and Aeneas–Apollo in Book 4 (4.143–50) invite readers, already in Servius Danielis' view, to register these two characters as twin siblings, thus emphasising the impossibility of their marriage.<sup>174</sup> Their meeting in the cave, at 4.165–6 (*speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem | deueniunt*, 'Dido and the Trojan leader come to the same cave'), where *dux* initially consorts with Dido before finding correct assignment to Aeneas, finally renders, with a 'linguistic double-take', 'this allusive merging into one of the two individuals'.<sup>175</sup>

This recognised mirroring between Dido and Aeneas, Carthage and Rome, when analysed together with the polarisation of Carthage as a barbarian city, creates a blurring of

<sup>173</sup> Liv. 1.55.5, Pl. *NH* 28.15, Serv. *ad A.* 8.345. The head, which symbolised 'the hold of Rome over an enemy', in the third century 'took on a new prophetic guise, assuring Rome of ultimate mastery' (Liv. 1.55.5 *caput rerum fore portendebat*, see Ogilvie (1965) 211). The two portents are read together by Brisson (1969) as prophesying Rome's (human head) ultimate conquest of Carthage (horse's head) notwithstanding the latter's military strength. For the ambiguity of line 445 and the phrase *facilem uictu*, see above, p. 106.

<sup>174</sup> DServ. *ad A.* 4.144 *quomodo germanorum nuptiae esse non possunt*, 'as a wedding cannot happen between siblings'; see Hardie (2006).

<sup>175</sup> Hardie (2006) 29.

boundaries and identities which is particularly suitable not only to the tragic genre,<sup>176</sup> but to the Dionysiac elements inherent in Virgil's Carthage, which are echoed through conspicuous references to Thebes and Euripides' *Bacchae*.<sup>177</sup> If the tragedy of Pentheus is a prominent tragic model for Dido's episode, this is not only because their cities share the same Phoenician ancestry: as with Euripides' *Bacchae*, one can see the Carthaginian episode as 'simultaneously telescoping polarity and identity',<sup>178</sup> marking 'the abolition of the frontier that normally separates the Greek[/Roman] man from the effeminate Barbarian'.<sup>179</sup>

However, unlike the *Bacchae*, the assimilation of western and barbarian in the *Aeneid* is made even more cogent and inevitably puzzling by the fact that we are no longer dealing with a twofold relationship: a Greek identity is inserted between Carthaginians and Romans, counting simultaneously as West and East, foreigner and ancestor, continuously shifting between opposites according to the perspective one adopts on the Trojans – whether they should be considered Phrygians or western Dardanians. This riddle of identities is well reflected in Virgil's handling of the Carthaginians' relationship to the Greeks. If, on the one hand, Carthaginians are inevitably treated as barbarians (not only through the features that they share with the Persians but even more evidently through the models of Phoenician Thebes for Carthage and of Medea for Dido), the sense of their belonging to the same party as the hostile Greeks is explicitly stressed after Aeneas' arrival at the city. Juno is their supporting goddess, in whose honour they have erected a temple which evidently celebrates the Achaeans' success over eastern foes in terms very closely reminiscent of

<sup>176</sup> See Segal (1986) 38–41.

<sup>177</sup> See the comparison between Dido and a maddened Maenad at *A.* 4.300–3, her dream of being Pentheus at *A.* 4.469–70 and the description of *Fama* as Maenad at *A.* 4.666. See Fernandelli (2002) and Krummen (2004) on the Bacchic features of *Aeneid* 4, Hardie (1990) on echoes of Virgil's Carthage in Ovid's Thebes as anti-Rome and generally Fenik (1960) and König (1970) on Virgil's debt to Euripides. For a similar Dionysiac blurring in relation to Carthage, Rome and civil war, see my reading of Horace's *Epode* 9: Giusti (2016b).

<sup>178</sup> Segal (1986) 38.

<sup>179</sup> Saïd (2002) 67.



fifth-century Athenian propaganda, with the Phrygians symbolising the defeated Persians.

From this perspective, it is noteworthy that one of the few plausible verbal reminiscences of Aeschylus' *Persae* in the *Aeneid* is related to the Trojan War. The island to which Aeneas describes the Greeks sailing off before the finding of the Horse may ominously recall Psyttaleia:<sup>180</sup>

est in conspectu Tenedos, notissima fama  
insula, diues opum Priami dum regna manebant,  
nunc tantum sinus et statio male fida carinis:

(*A.* 2.21–3)

Within sight is the island of Tenedos, very famous in history, and rich in resources while Priam's reign stood; now it is just a bay, with a none too safe anchorage for the ships.

νησός τις ἔστι πρόσθε Σαλαμῖνος τόπων,  
βαία, δύσσορμος ναυσὶν ...

(*Pers.* 447–8)

There is an island in front of Salamis: it is small, and offers no good anchorage for the ships ...

Aeneas, aligning himself with the Persian messenger,<sup>181</sup> seems to be aware of the link between the Trojan and Persian Wars as famously expressed by the Persians themselves at the beginning of Herodotus' narrative (Hdt. 1.5 Οὐτῶ μὲν Πέρσαι λέγουσι γενέσθαι, καὶ διὰ τὴν Ἰλίου ἄλωσιν εὐρίσκουσι σφίσι εὐθύναν τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς ἐχθρῆς τῆς ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, 'such is the Persian account of the matter: in their opinion, it was the sack of Troy which began their enmity with the Greeks'). Noticeably, the same orientalist connotation of wealth applied to Carthage at the beginning of the previous book (1.14 *diues opum*) has now been transferred to Priam's kingdom (2.22 *diues opum*), partly in response to the already established equation of Carthage and Troy,<sup>182</sup> partly in transferal of barbaric traits to

<sup>180</sup> The similarities are slight, but already noted by Austin (1964) 39.

<sup>181</sup> For other points of contact between Aeneas and the messenger in the *Persae*, see Rossi (2004a) 52.

<sup>182</sup> See above, pp. 99–100.

these orientalist pre-Romans. As a common thread in this transfer of barbaric traits, the ‘barbaric gold’ of the doors of Priam’s palace (2.504 *barbarico postes auro*), reminiscent of Ennius’ *Andromacha* (fr. 23 Manuwald *ope barbarica*), will appear again, this time in its Ennian phrasing, in the description of Antony’s forces at 8.685 (*ope barbarica*), symbol of the Civil Wars’ inseparable blending of West and East, Romans and barbarians.<sup>183</sup>

#### 2.4.2 Teucrian Carthaginians

Within these encounters of West and East, Ajax, Salamis’ hero,<sup>184</sup> supplies a privileged viewpoint to explore both the use of tragedy in the *Aeneid* and the intersections between Carthaginians and Trojans. Ajax himself is a literary model that has been recognised as equally applicable to both Aeneas and Dido,<sup>185</sup> and his half-brother Teucer provides the mythical point of contact between Troy and Sidon. According to Dido, it is thanks to this Teucer, the founder of Cypriot Salamis, that she has been informed of the Trojans’ misfortunes:

atque equidem Teucrum memini Sidona uenire  
finibus expulsum patriis, noua regna petentem  
auxilio Beli; genitor tum Belus opimam  
uastabat Cyprum et uictor dicione tenebat.

(*A.* 1.619–22)

I myself remember Teucer coming to Sidon after he was exiled from his fatherland, asking help to Belus for founding a new reign; at the time my father Belus was plundering wealthy Cyprus and, as its conqueror, kept it under his control.

The myth of Teucer, who founded another Salamis in Cyprus after being repudiated by his father Telamon for not avenging Ajax’s death, was probably created as part of the propaganda of Athenian expansion in the East right after the

<sup>183</sup> See Wigodsky (1972) 78, Bowie (1990) 480 n. 79.

<sup>184</sup> On Salamis as ‘Ajax’s island’ (νῆσος Αἰάντος), see *Pers.* 307, 368, 596.

<sup>185</sup> On Ajax in the *Aeneid* see Lefèvre (1978b), Lyne (1987) 9–12, A. Barchiesi (1999) 324, Panoussi (2002) and (2009) 177–217.

Persian Wars,<sup>186</sup> and it is presented as such both in Pindar's fourth Nemean Ode (*Nem.* 4.46) and in Aeschylus' *Persians* (895), where it is apparent that 'the attempt to win a victory at one Salamis has led, or will lead, to the loss of the other'.<sup>187</sup> The myth was apparently popular not only in Athenian tragedy (we know of the existence of a *Teucer* by Sophocles and a *Salaminiae* by Aeschylus), but, more curiously, in its Roman adaptations. While we know little of Ennius' *Telamo*, or of a possible *Teucer* by Livius Andronicus, we are relatively well informed about the *Teucer* of Pacuvius, and its popularity up to Augustan times.<sup>188</sup> A key part of the evidence for the popularity of Pacuvius' *Teucer* is interestingly given by the strikingly intense reuse of its scanty preserved fragments at the beginning of the *Aeneid*. Whereas we cannot assess if the above-mentioned passage on the founding of Cypriot Salamis was taken from Pacuvius,<sup>189</sup> many passages of the storm in Book 1, as we have already mentioned, do seem to have drawn on Teucer's narration of the storm that attacked his fleet after his departure from Troy:<sup>190</sup> notably, the same storm that Juno had expressed her desire to emulate, and which had caused the death of the other Ajax in the version of another tragedian, Accius (*A.* 1.39–41).<sup>191</sup>

The identification of Teucer as a sort of mediator between Trojans and Tyrians is noteworthy in view of the recognised model of Ajax for Virgil's Dido.<sup>192</sup> The use of Sophocles' *Ajax* as a model for Dido's death anticipates the explicit modelling of the meeting between Aeneas and Dido in Book 6 on that

<sup>186</sup> Nilsson (1951) 64–5.

<sup>187</sup> Garvie (2009) 335.

<sup>188</sup> Cic. *de or.* 1.246, 2.193, 3.157, *de diu.* 1.24, *Fam.* 8.2.1. See Boyle (2006) 100–6; Schierl (2006) 468–514.

<sup>189</sup> See Stabryła (1970) 41.

<sup>190</sup> Cf. Pac. *Teu.* fr. 239.1 Schierl *profectione laeti* and *A.* 1.35 *uela dabant laeti*; fr. 241 Schierl *nauium* | *flictus, armamentum stridor et rudentum sibilus* and *A.* 1.87 *insequitur clamorque uirum stridorque rudentum* and other passages with Stabryła (1970) 41–5; I would also add a slight similarity between fr. 255 Schierl *ubi poetae pro sua parte falsa conficta* <nt>, *canunt* | *qui causam humilem dictis ampliant* (not certainly belonging to *Teucer*) and Virgil's *Fama* at *A.* 4.189–90 *haec tum multiplici populos sermone replebat* | *gaudens, et pariter facta atque infecta canebat*.

<sup>191</sup> See Hardie (1997) 324.

<sup>192</sup> See Lefèvre (1978b), Panoussi (2009) 182–98.

of Odysseus and Ajax at *Od.* 11.543–67, already recognised by Servius.<sup>193</sup> In terms of oriental identities, Dido's proximity to the Greek hero of the Persian Wars, together with the 'invention'<sup>194</sup> that her father had helped Teucer in founding a second Salamis, would seem to dismantle the barbarian orientalisising theatre that had been set up for Carthage, revealing instead the similarities between Greeks and Carthaginians – eastern foes of the Romans, or western foes of the Trojans. However, the identification of Aeneas with Odysseus in *Aeneid* 6 (needless to say, an identification which runs throughout the poem) and, even more telling, with Ajax in *Aeneid* 12,<sup>195</sup> should question even this model. In addition, as regards the use of the Ajax model in the Augustan age, it may be significant that Ajax was after all the victim of a sort of internal conflict. Unfortunately, we are unable to assess whether Virgil also had in mind Ennius' *Ajax* or Pacuvius' *Armorum Iudicium* when using Ajax for the representation of his Dido, but an interesting anecdote preserved by Suetonius might prompt investigation of the political and Roman use of Ajax in the *Aeneid* further than has so far been achieved. Suetonius claims that a line of Pacuvius' *Armorum Iudicium* was sung at the funeral games of Julius Caesar 'to rouse pity and indignation at his death' (*ad miserationem et inuidiam caedis eius*):

'men seruasse, ut essent qui me perderent?'

(Suet. *Iul.* 84.2 = Pacuv. *Arm. Iud.* fr. 31 Schierl)

'Saved I these men so that they could murder me?'

This line, probably taken from Aeschylus' Ὀπλων κρίσις, seems to have been delivered by Ajax against Ulixes<sup>196</sup> in a line of reasoning strikingly similar to Dido's complaints to Aeneas, when

<sup>193</sup> Serv. *ad A.* 6.468 *tractum autem est hoc de Homero, qui inducit Aiakis umbram Vlixis conloquia fugientem, quod ei fuerat causa mortis*, 'this scene is taken from Homer, who represented the shadow of Ajax in the action of escaping conversation with Ulixes, since he had been the cause of his death'; see Norden (1957) 253, Knauer (1964) 108–12.

<sup>194</sup> Austin (1971) 191.

<sup>195</sup> See *A.* 12.435–40 with Tarrant (2012) 202–3; on Aeneas as Ajax, see Lyne (1987) 8–12, 113–14 (on the Ajax model being handed over from Turnus to Aeneas), Panoussi (2009) 214–16, A. Barchiesi (1999) 324.

<sup>196</sup> See the *Scholia in Suetonii Vitas Caesarum* and Schierl (2006) 154.

she reminds him of his ingratitude in return for her saving of the fleet (*A.* 4.373–8). Even though it is impossible to trace the political significance of Ajax in early Roman theatre (supposing he had any), the model of the Ajax–Odysseus dispute as a strife between compatriots was evidently central to the reception of its myth in view of the treacherous murder of Caesar. Paradoxically, even in the Greek myth, the hero who would become the symbol of the wars against the Persian barbarians was one whose death had been caused by an internal conflict.

If Carthaginians and Romans are both pulled on to the Greek side by the model of Ajax, which pushes to the foreground the uncanny memories of the Roman Civil Wars behind the myth which lies at the heart of the Punic Wars, the figure of Teucer can be singled out as embodying this continuous shift of eastern paradigms. Indeed, the mediator between Carthaginians and Romans is emphatically a character who, as son of Telamon and of Priam's sister Hesione, is both Greek and Trojan. Teucer was inside the wooden horse, but his expulsion from Salamis pointed to his responsibility for the death of Salamis' hero; he is connected to Athens' expansionist propaganda, though at the same time the founder of an eastern city, a bulwark of Phoenicia; furthermore, his homonymy with another Teucer, the legendary ancestor of the Trojan kings, previously mentioned by Venus (1.235), who will be the cause of the Trojans' misunderstanding of their western origins in Book 3, must reinforce this eastern–western ambiguity.<sup>197</sup>

If Virgil is alluding to Teucer's speech at Horace's *Odes* 1.7 in Aeneas' speech to his comrades,<sup>198</sup> the model of Teucer would point to Aeneas' founding of a city *ambigua* in her being a *futura Troia*, prefiguring at the same time the unification of West and East, and the difficulties of multicultural integration:

‘quo nos cumque feret melior fortuna parente,  
ibimus, o socii comitesque,

<sup>197</sup> See A. Barchiesi (1999) 337.

<sup>198</sup> Nisbet–Hubbard (1970) 107: ‘This may be one of the rare places where Horace has influenced Virgil, unless both are indebted to an earlier poet, perhaps Naevius ...’.

## Trojan Carthaginians

nil desperandum Teucro duce et auspice Teucro.  
certus enim promisit Apollo  
ambiguam tellure noua Salamina futuram.  
o fortes peioraque passi  
mecum saepe uiri, nunc uino pellite curas:  
cras ingens iterabimus aequor.’

(Hor. *Carm.* 1.7.25–32)

‘Wherever fortune shall carry us we will go, allies and comrades, since she is kinder than my father. There’s nothing to despair under Teucer’s guidance and Teucer’s auspices. For Apollo does not lie, and he has promised us a future second Salamis in a new land. You are strong men and have often suffered worse with me – now let wine cast away your sorrows: tomorrow we shall set out again upon the broad sea.’

‘O socii (neque enim ignari sumus ante malorum),  
o passi grauiora, dabit deus his quoque finem.  
uos et Scyllaeam rabiem penitusque sonantis  
accestis scopulos, uos et Cyclopia saxa  
expert: reuocate animos maestumque timorem  
mittite; forsan et haec olim meminisse iuuabit.  
per uarios casus, per tot discrimina rerum  
tendimus in Latium, sedes ubi fata quietas  
ostendunt; illic fas regna resurgere Troiae.  
durate, et uosmet rebus seruare secundis.’

(A. 1.198–207)

‘Comrades, we are not unaware of misfortunes: you have gone through worse before, and a god will give an end to this too. You have gone through rabid Scylla and her resounding crags, you have also experienced the rocks of the Cyclopes. So summon up your courage and cast away the gloom of fear; maybe one day it will even be pleasurable to remember this. It is through various perils, through so many crises that we are making for Latium; for there it is that Troy was fated to rise again. Endure, and save yourselves for better days.’

There is no straightforward interpretation of the adjective *ambigua* in relation to Teucer’s new Salamis; where others have read an allusion to the ambiguity of oracles, Nisbet and Hubbard take it together with *noua* as to ‘imply a new Salamis’ in contrast to ‘the real one’ (Sen. *Tro.* 844 *Aiacis Salamina*

ueram).<sup>199</sup> The colony of Ajax's half-brother can only be a half-Greek city, ambiguously on the border between two continents which had just clashed and were destined to face each other again.

Even if we leave aside the question of whether the 'future Troy' will also hold this ambiguous, western–eastern status, Carthage, 'the new city', is not only a second Tyre but also homonymous with another Carthage in Cyprus,<sup>200</sup> and explicitly considered *ambigua* by Venus:

quippe domum timet ambiguum Tyriosque bilinguis;  
(A. 1.661)

Clearly she feared this ambiguous household, and the double-tongued Tyrians;

Ambiguity, in this case, is not directly connected to Carthage's status as a new colony, but points instead to the Carthaginians' *Punica fides*, a stereotype which probably arose from those applied to Phoenicians as early as in 'Homeric times', as we shall briefly see. The connection between untrustworthiness and bilingualism (or plurilingualism, as in the case of Hanno in Plautus' *Poenulus*) goes back to the definition of 'barbarians' established on a linguistic criterion<sup>201</sup> and plays on the double meaning of the Latin *bilinguis* ('bilingual' as well as 'treacherous as a snake'), which establishes a clear connection with the slippery untrustworthiness that the loss of a clear linguistic identity would seem to determine.<sup>202</sup>

### 2.4.3 Phoenician Carthaginians

The *Punica fides* attributed to the Carthaginians at A. 1.661 is explicitly connected to their Phoenician identity, and it marks the longevity of a stereotype which springs from the Homeric poems, but acquires different connotations when it is transferred to the city of Thebes and finally reaches the

<sup>199</sup> Nisbet–Hubbard (1970) 107.

<sup>200</sup> Winter (1995) 251.

<sup>201</sup> See E. Hall (1989) 4 n. 5.

<sup>202</sup> See Chapter 1.5, p. 80.

Carthaginians of the Punic Wars. The Phoenicians, though on some grounds the pre-Persian Greek barbarians, played a role in relation to the Greeks that was similar to that which the Greeks would later play in relation to the Romans: a highly developed, cultured and civilised society of the Near East whose influence in Greece brought about not only extremely refined luxury items and art works, but, more importantly, ‘among many other kinds of learning’ (Hdt. 5.58 ἄλλα τε πολλὰ ... διδασκάλια), ‘the alphabet, which had hitherto been unknown to the Greeks’ (Hdt. 5.58 γράμματα, οὐκ ἔοντα πρὶν Ἑλληνισί). The ambiguous Greek view of Phoenicians<sup>203</sup> foreshadows the same reservations held by Romans towards Greece and may have sprung, in very simplistic terms, from a sort of extended national complex towards a more ancient and developed neighbouring civilisation. The Homeric poems already engage with this double attitude: on the one hand, Phoenicians/Sidonians are an extremely developed merchant civilisation, particularly skilled in highly sophisticated handiwork (*Il.* 23.743 Σιδόνες πολυδαίδαλοι), but this technical development quickly leads to their portrayal as ‘greedy’, ‘tricky’, ‘crafty’ and ‘wily’ (*Od.* 15.419 Φοίνικες πολυπαίπαλοι, ‘likely a conscious wordplay on πολυδαίδαλοι’<sup>204</sup>). In the *Odyssey*, Phoenicians’ ‘commercial activities ... are either corrupting or corrupt’ and they ‘are described as willing to break codes of honor for profit’ and ‘set up as the antithesis of the heroic values of the Greeks’.<sup>205</sup>

In the *Aeneid*, it is significant that the primary model for the Carthaginian episode is that of the Phaeacians, whose striking similarity to the Phoenicians goes far beyond a merely phonetic assonance, to the point that an identification between the two has often been proposed in the past.<sup>206</sup> More recent scholarship has rightly emphasised the presence of a ‘polarised opposition’ between the two, with the wondrous Phaeacians being the idealised and positive version of the

<sup>203</sup> See especially Gruen (2011) 116–22.

<sup>204</sup> Winter (1995) 249.

<sup>205</sup> Winter (1995) 261.

<sup>206</sup> See Leask (1888).



historical Phoenicians.<sup>207</sup> It is remarkable that this civilisation, which dwells on the edge between fantasy and reality and thus marks Odysseus' transition from the fantastic wonderlands to the down-to-earth reality of Ithaca,<sup>208</sup> should be envisaged as the inverted, positive version of both fantastic monsters such as the Cyclopes and historical competitors such as the Phoenicians. Yet, at the same time, the analogies which link them to their opposites work against any stable neutralisation of the dangers posed by the Greeks' foes, whose negation cannot but evoke their presence under erasure: as recognised by some, the Phaeacian land proves to pose more threats than would appear at first glance.<sup>209</sup> Behind their generous and sociable attitude, the Phaeacians 'do not endure foreigners, nor do they give kindly welcome to him who comes from another land' (*Od.* 7.32–3 οὐ γὰρ ξείνους οἶδε μάλ' ἀνθρώπους ἀνέχονται, | οὐδ' ἀγαπαζόμενοι φιλέουσ' ὅς κ' ἄλλοθεν ἔλθῃ); their arrogance (6.274 ὑπερφίαλοι) draws them close to their negative neighbours, the Cyclopes (9.106 Κυκλώπων ... ὑπερφιάλων), to which they are related in kinship through the figure of Poseidon, Alcinous' grandfather and Arete's great-grandfather, and the enemy deity of Odysseus.<sup>210</sup> Similarly, the Carthaginians' arrogance or 'fierceness' is set aside only by Jupiter's intervention (*A.* 1.302–3 *ponuntque ferocia Poeni* | *corda uolente deo*, 'in accordance with the divine will the Punics set aside their ferocious hearts'),<sup>211</sup> and yet they demonstrate aversion to strangers according to Ilioneus (*A.* 1.539–41 *quod genus hoc hominum? quaeue hunc tam barbara morem* | *permittit patria? hospitio prohibemur harenae; | bella cient primaque uetant consistere terra*, 'What kind of men are these? Is this country so barbarian to allow such a custom? We are refused the right to the shore; they make war on us and do not allow us to set foot on land'). Their 'national deity', Juno, is the *Aeneid's* equivalent of Poseidon. Overall, both Athena

<sup>207</sup> Winter (1995), Dougherty (2001) 102–21.

<sup>208</sup> See Segal (1962) 21–8.

<sup>209</sup> See G. P. Rose (1969) and Gross (1976).

<sup>210</sup> See G. P. Rose (1969).

<sup>211</sup> On this point and its relationship to Athena's intervention with Nausicaa in the *Odyssey*, see Syed (2005) 154–6.

and Venus have their own good reasons for hiding their protégés in a cloud of mist, so that no one in this strange land would approach them (*Od.* 7.16–17; *A.* 1.411–15).

But what is peculiar about the Carthaginian land is that, whereas in Homer there is no direct hint at an identification between Phoenicians and Phaeacians, these people are authentic Tyrians only disguised and presented as Phaeacians. The atmosphere of a wonderland and fantasy realm that the Carthaginians retain from the epic Greek model is undermined by the construction of a city which, as a Phoenician colony in the West, would inevitably be compared to the colony of Thebes, and was equally called *Καδμεία*.<sup>212</sup> The activation of the tragic model of Thebes, ‘the obverse side of Athens’,<sup>213</sup> drags Aeneas into a world of ‘ill-defined boundaries, incestuous tensions, blurred gender identities, a household (and a land) *ambigua*’.<sup>214</sup> Thebes, and especially Euripides’ Thebes, is the theatrical site where the Greek vs. barbarian polarisations eventually collapse. Like Teucer’s new Salamis, like Carthage and like Rome, it is a city that layers of myth and history have gradually built up as a hybrid, belonging neither to East nor West: if its national deity, Dionysus, ‘is equally “at home” among Greeks and Barbarians, it is because he belongs to both worlds’.<sup>215</sup>

It is therefore from the point of view of the dissolution of the strict polarities set up when equating Carthaginians to Persians that the strong influence of the *Bacchae* as intertext should be analysed. On the one hand, Carthage is presented as the home of the Dionysiac as early as Aeneas’ arrival: the Nymphs sitting in the harbour’s *antrum* (1.168 *Nympharum domus*, ‘house of Nymphs’) and the *Oreades* of the Dido–Diana simile (1.500 *hinc atque hinc glomerantur Oreades*, ‘the Oreades cluster around her’) look forward to those who will witness Aeneas and Dido’s union in the cave with ritual howling

<sup>212</sup> Steph. Byz. s.v. *Καρχηδών*. On Carthage and Thebes, see Scheid–Svenbro (1985), Hardie (1990).

<sup>213</sup> Zeitlin (1986) 117.

<sup>214</sup> Schiesaro (2008) 97.

<sup>215</sup> Saïd (2002) 98.

(4.168 *ulularunt uertice Nymphae*, 'the Nymphs howled from the mountain tops'). These latter Nymphs are assimilated to the Maenads of Dionysiac all-nighters<sup>216</sup> to which Dido and the women of the city (4.667 *femineo ululatu*) will be later more explicitly compared:

saeuit inops animi totamque incensa per urbem  
bacchatur, qualis commotis excita sacris  
Thyias, ubi audito stimulant trieterica Baccho  
orgia nocturnusque uocat clamore Cithaeron.

(A. 4.300–3)

Out of her mind and burning with passion she rages and raves throughout the city, like a Bacchant stirred by the shaking of the sacred emblems, when she hears the name of Bacchus and the biennial orgies excite her soul and the shouting of Mount Cithaeron calls her in the night.

On the other hand, however, as Cliff Weber has convincingly shown, the strong similarities between Aeneas and Bacchus in the Aeneas–Apollo simile (4.143–50) and the parallels between the hunting scene of Book 4 and Pentheus' mountain hunt in Euripides' *Bacchae* point to the recognition of Aeneas as 'the Virgilian counterpart of Euripides' Dionysus, as both the hunter who survives the hunt and a stranger newly arrived from Asia. His advent, like that of Dionysus, leads to the death of the reigning monarch. Dido corresponds to one of Euripides' Maenads ... even more salient, however, are the affinities between Dido and Pentheus.<sup>217</sup> Dido's anguished dream of actually *being* Pentheus (4.469–70 *Eumenidum ueluti demens uidet agmina Pentheus | et solem geminum et duplices se ostendere Thebas*, 'like Pentheus in her frenzy she sees the arrays of Furies, and a double sun, and Thebes showing itself as two cities') would therefore point to

<sup>216</sup> Cf. Eur. *Bacch.* 689 ἡ σὴ δὲ μήτηρ ὠλόλυξεν and 1133 αἱ δ' ὠλόλυζον; A. 4.168 is further strongly reminiscent of Hecate's apparition to Jason in Apollonius' *Argonautica* 3.1218–19 αἱ δ' ὠλόλυξαν | Νύμφαι. Cf. Bocciolini Palagi (2007) 35 n. 70: 'se *ululatus* evoca le grida rituali di invocazione a Bacco, richiama anche l'ululato sinistro e inquietante delle Furie (come ha occasione di notare Servio ad *Aen.* 4.257 *ululare ... et Furiarum est*)'.

<sup>217</sup> Weber (2002) 334.

the recognition of Aeneas as the foreign eastern deity come to destroy her realm.

As recently examined by Mac Góráin, the profusion of Dionysiac references in the second half of the *Aeneid*, and particularly in Book 7,<sup>218</sup> can be interpreted in terms of a structuring of *Aeneid* 7–12 after the plot of Euripides' *Bacchae*, which creates a parallel between Dionysus' return to his own land in the form of a *xenos* and Aeneas' arrival at the land of his ancestors.<sup>219</sup> Euripides' *Bacchae* will then provide 'the most important tragic model for the *Aeneid*'s substratum of civil war thematics in the context of the foundation of a city ... which reflects on recent and contemporary history'.<sup>220</sup> The fact that the same tragic model also lies at the core of the Carthage episode serves to emphasise not only the strong thematic correspondences between the two halves of the poem, but also the presentation of Carthage as one of Aeneas' possible homes, a 'paradoxically foreign "motherland"' <sup>221</sup> which is intratextually equated both to Troy and to the site of future Rome, and intertextually reminiscent of Ithaca by use of the harbour of Phorcys (*Od.* 13.96–112) as the ecphrastic model for the Carthaginian one, a harbour which noticeably also featured a cave of Nymphs (*Od.* 13.103–4 ἀγχόθι δ' αὐτῆς ἄντρον ἐπήρατον ἡεροειδές, | ἱρὸν νυμφάων αἷ νηϊάδες καλέονται, 'and near it is the pleasant, shadowy cave, sacred to the Nymphs that are called Naiads').

Ithaca, the epic home *par excellence*, is an apt model for Carthage in its being presented to Odysseus as an oxymoronic 'unheimlich home'. Related to Phorcys, Polyphemus' grandfather (*Od.* 1.70–73) and a quasi-double for Proteus (*Od.* 13.96 Φόρκυνος ... ἁλίοιο γέροντος, 'Phorcys, the old man of the sea'; cf. 4.349 and 4.384 γέρων ἅλιος νημερτής, 'the unerring old man of the sea'), Ithaca's harbour symbolises

<sup>218</sup> On which see Bocciolini Palagi (2007).

<sup>219</sup> See Mac Góráin (2009) and (2013).

<sup>220</sup> Mac Góráin (2009) 80.

<sup>221</sup> Oliensis (2001) 49.

the interaction between the world of reality – ‘Ithaca, the every-day, the logically predictable and rationally explicable’<sup>222</sup> – and ‘the world of phantasy through which Odysseus has passed’.<sup>223</sup> Its two precipitous headlands (*Od.* 13.97–8 δύο δὲ προβλήτες ἐν αὐτῷ | ἄκται ἀπορρῶγες, λιμένος ποτιπεπτηῦται, ‘and at its mouth two precipitous headlands, sheer to seaward, but sloping down on the side towards the harbour’, taken up at *A.* 1.162–4 *hinc atque hinc uastae rupes geminique minantur* | *in caelum scopuli, quorum sub uertice late* | *aequora tuta silent*, ‘Here and there are vast crags, and two two great pinnacles threaten the sky on either side, beneath whose peaks the broad waters are still and silent’) recall Scylla and Charybdis (*Od.* 12.73–4 Οἱ δὲ δύο σκόπελοι ὁ μὲν οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἱκάνει | ὀξείῃ κορυφῇ, ‘on the other side are two cliffs, one of which reaches with its sharp peak to the broad heaven’); the shelter from winds (*Od.* 13.99–101, cf. *A.* 1.159–64) echoes the description of the harbours of the Cyclopes (*Od.* 9.136–41) and the Laestrygonians (*Od.* 10.87–94), both also recognised models for the Carthaginian harbour;<sup>224</sup> finally, the cave of the Nymphs, where the Phaeacians’ gifts are concealed and mysteriously ‘never heard of again’,<sup>225</sup> ‘is but one of the many caves that Odysseus has known’, from Calypso’s to the Cyclopes’ or Scylla’s, ‘places of crucial and perilous passage’.<sup>226</sup>

The interactions with Ithaca exploited in the Carthaginian harbour, if analysed together with the Dionysiac features of Aeneas in Carthage, set up the frame of a *nostos* which is not only strongly suggested by the similarities between Aeneas and Dido, but even craved by the queen herself, whose agony lies at the edge between her desire to play a second Penelope and the sensation of acting as a second Pentheus instead. But there is also another famously recognised model which is similarly at work in the construction and dissolution of polarities: if

<sup>222</sup> Segal (1962) 17.

<sup>223</sup> Segal (1962) 48.

<sup>224</sup> See Austin (1971) 71–2.

<sup>225</sup> Niles (1978) 56.

<sup>226</sup> Segal (1962) 48.

Aeneas' acting as Dionysus could strengthen Dido's confidence that he has come to rescue her from her perilous neighbours as Dionysus came to rescue Ariadne, it will soon be clear that he is also no less a veritable Theseus. Treacherous, cruel, cold-blooded perhaps, and an Athenian hero – the Greek national slayer of monsters and barbarians alike.

## CHAPTER 3

### VIRGIL'S REVISIONIST EPIC AND LIVY'S REVISIONIST HISTORY

Much of the paradox, absurdity, and opacity of prelinguistic philosophy stems from failure to distinguish between speaking and speaking about speaking.

Gustav Bergmann<sup>1</sup>

#### 3.1 Virgil's and Livy's Linguistic Turn on the Hannibalic War

If the first half of this book has been primarily concerned with the representations of the Punic enemy from the middle Republic up to Virgil's *Aeneid*, the two remaining chapters will centre instead on the poem's literary representations of, or allusions to, the Punic Wars. This change of focus calls for different sources of comparison, moving the attention away from Greek and Latin tragic and epic texts in order to explore the poem's intersections with the historiographical works on the Punic Wars, namely the histories of Polybius and Livy. And yet, despite this shift, the arguments proposed in the first two chapters continue to affect this slightly different analysis of Virgil's Carthage episode. Chapters 1 and 2 posited that Virgil's shaping of the Carthaginians in the *Aeneid* must be considered as a point of arrival in a long chain of representations of oriental enemies as barbarians in Greek and Latin fictional texts. I argued that while the representation of the enemy collided with the spectre of the enemy as a mirror for the self already in the Greek sources, Virgil's poem in particular shows an obsessive and continuous muddling of the polarisations between Carthaginian and Roman, enemy and friend, 'other' and 'self'. This elision of differences brings to

<sup>1</sup> Bergmann (1964) 177.

the surface the painful memory of the Civil Wars behind an episode whose main aim should be to recall the apex of Roman military prowess by recounting the prehistory of Rome's conflict against, and victory over, its most powerful military (arch-)enemy. The same confusion between 'other' and 'self' continues to appear in the poem's allusions to the wars, since Punic and Civil Wars constantly collide into each other, both in Virgil's epic and, perhaps most dramatically, in Livy's allegedly objective historiographical narrative. This suggests that the rewriting of the Punic Wars in the early Principate not only highlights the slippery relationship between myth and history in Latin literature, but also provides one of the most significant examples of what I do not hesitate to dub ancient 'historical revisionism'.<sup>2</sup> While [Chapter 4](#) will focus more closely on Virgil's rewriting of the Punic Wars in the *Aeneid*, and on the collusion of Punic and Civil Wars in both Virgil and Livy, the aim of the present chapter is to set up the theoretical frame for such reading, proposing that Virgil's and Livy's texts are aware, and indeed parade, the fictional nature of their mythical and historical narratives by their careful and pointed use of *Fama* ('rumour', 'fame', 'tradition') in Virgil's *Aeneid* 4 and Livy's Book 21.

Just like Augustus' building of the Urbs of marble, the rewriting of Roman Republican history under the Principate can also be seen to indicate that destruction is the preliminary condition to (re)construction.<sup>3</sup> As the capture of Troy in Book 2 of the *Aeneid* has long been seen to demonstrate, ashes bring about the possibility of true renewal:<sup>4</sup> those readers ready to accept the existence of an allegory of the Civil Wars behind Virgil's destruction of Troy, most evident in the connections

<sup>2</sup> See the Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 28.3 *Urbem neque pro maiestate imperii ornatam et inundationibus incendiisque obnoxiam excoluit adeo, ut iure sit gloriatus marmoream se relinquere, quam latericiam accepisset*, 'he developed the city, which was not adorned to match the majesty of the empire and constantly exposed to floods and fires, so much that he would rightly boast that he was leaving in marble a city that he had received in bricks'.

<sup>4</sup> See Knox (1950); Morgan (1998) and (1999) for the concept of 'constructive destruction'.



between the death of Priam and that of Pompey the Great,<sup>5</sup> will not fail to recognise the message that, just as the fall of Troy was the necessary evil for the rise of Rome, the Roman Civil Wars were the necessary evil for the establishment of the Augustan peace. And yet, whatever view one may hold on the autocratic nature of Augustus' rule, the already complex history of those wars inevitably passed into the hands of renewed retrospective interests, which could alter it and correct it according to the needs of their conscious or subconscious political agendas. As we have seen in the Introduction,<sup>6</sup> this is what Horace seems to imply in his Ode to Pollio (*Ode* 2.1), when he comments on Asinius Pollio's rewriting of those wars, subtly suggesting that the historian undertook not so much a *tractatio* of the wars, but rather their *retractatio*: a 're-writing',<sup>7</sup> 'correction and alteration'<sup>8</sup> of history. Further examples of what I shall from now on dub 'Augustan historical revisionism' are easy to come by, especially in the emperor's own *Res Gestae*<sup>9</sup> and in Horace's historical poems,<sup>10</sup> so much so that one is tempted to generalise, with John Henderson, that 'sorting out how the past, and its past, was to be told, lay at the heart of the politics of the Augustan present'.<sup>11</sup>

While it is relatively unproblematic to entertain the notion that the history of the Civil Wars, especially that of the war between Octavian and Antony, could be altered according to the present needs of Augustus' politics, the same cannot be said of mid-Republican history, whose historical account may be considered by scholars as fairly disconnected from the worries of the newly established Principate. Throughout this book I have been arguing, however, that this was not

<sup>5</sup> See already Servius *ad Aen.* 2.557: *Pompei tangit historiam*, 'here he touches on the history of Pompey'. See Moles (1983), Bowie (1990), Morgan (2000); cf. also Narducci (1973).

<sup>6</sup> Introduction, p. 4.

<sup>7</sup> T. S. Johnson (2009) 314.

<sup>8</sup> Henderson (1996) 119 = (1998) 149; cf. Henderson (1996) 63 = (1998) 112.

<sup>9</sup> In which, as Cooley (2009) 31 points out, 'Augustus ... makes what is really interpretation appear as fact.'

<sup>10</sup> See, among many, Santirocco (1995), and Watson (1987) on the 'Art of Falsehood' of *Epode* 9.

<sup>11</sup> Henderson (1996) 62 = (1998) 112.

the case: the myth and history of the Punic Wars, presented by Virgil and Livy in epic and historiography at around the same time, were as a matter of fact so entangled with the Civil Wars that they became immediately subject to the influence of Augustan historical revisionism. Indeed, as I have shown in the Introduction, the Punic Wars constituted the last historical example of Roman military prowess, whose final outcome, the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE, by causing the disappearance of that *metus hostilis* ('fear of the enemy') which is a necessary element of national cohesion, would bring about the crisis of the Roman Republic which ultimately resulted in the shedding of brotherly rather than foreign blood.<sup>12</sup> This notion, commonly known as 'Sallust's Theorem', is found in Horace's Ode to Pollio, as well as at critical junctures of Virgil's *Aeneid* and Livy's third decade, as we are going to see more clearly in the [next chapter](#).<sup>13</sup> Before that, I shall now single out two case studies in which Virgil and Livy deal, respectively, with the mythical and historical causes of the Punic Wars (the love story between Aeneas and Dido in *Aeneid* 4 and Hannibal's attack on Saguntum in Livy 21) and show that, by directing the readers' attention to chronological inconsistencies included in their accounts, they both show awareness of the process of destruction and reconstruction of such causes according to the needs of Augustan historical revisionism. Such awareness, I posit, is exemplified by their parallel treatment of *Fama*-as-rumour, which highlights, in both cases, the fictional nature of their rewriting of the causes of the wars, showing that, as soon as an event is put down in words, 'as soon as it speaks', to use Kermode's formulation, 'it begins to be a novel, it imposes causality and concordance, development, character ...'.<sup>14</sup>

In the wake of the so-called 'linguistic turn' in intellectual history, students of historiography like to emphasise that any historical account is to some degree fictional.<sup>15</sup> If the

<sup>12</sup> See [Introduction](#), p. 6.

<sup>13</sup> Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.25–8; Verg. *Aen.* 4.629; Liv. 30.44.7–8; on Virgil and Livy see especially Reeve (1987). See [Introduction](#) and [Chapter 4.4.1](#).

<sup>14</sup> Kermode (1966) 140.

<sup>15</sup> See in particular White (1973) and (1987). For an introduction to the topic, see E. A. Clark (2004).

historicism of the nineteenth century still endorsed the possibility of an objective enquiry into – and recording of – the human past, the new historicism that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century maintains that any version of the past is always already a narrative construct. I would like to contend that Virgil and Livy, in how they bring *Fama* into play in their accounts of the origins of the Second Punic War, anticipate some of the key insights of new historicism, not least by drawing attention to how shifts in power can impact on and inflect historical narratives.<sup>16</sup>

### 3.2 The Historian and the Poet

History and epic have famously been intertwined ever since their beginnings. The common notion that the Homeric poems, and the *Iliad* in particular, were felt to recount in dactylic poetry the historical events of an historical war finds its confirmation in the challenging but at the same time reverential attitude towards Homeric epic assumed by Herodotus and Thucydides in the prefaces to their historiographical works.<sup>17</sup> In a historiographical chain of *imitatio cum aemulatione*, the Trojan War stands as the fundamental paradigm of historical ‘greatness’ which is superseded by Herodotus’ Persian Wars, in their turn doomed to be overtaken by Thucydides’ Peloponnesian War. It is as a further link in this chain that both Polybius’ and Livy’s accounts of the Punic Wars find their appropriate place and their justification. The ‘spectacle’ (Pol. 1.2.1 θεώρημα) provided by Polybius’ history will be ‘incredible and grand’ (παράδοξον καὶ μέγα) such as none before it, because the subject itself, the ‘Roman dominion’, bears no comparison with the Persian, the Spartan and the Macedonian (Pol. 1.2.2–4). At the centre of this spectacle, the Hannibalic War stands out, in Livy’s phrasing, as ‘the most memorable of all wars ever waged’ (Liv. 21.1.1 *bellum maxime omnium memorabile*).

<sup>16</sup> For a similar view on Livy’s preface, see Henderson (1989). On the narrative and literary aspect of ancient historiography, see Woodman (1983) and (1988).

<sup>17</sup> See Moles (1993) 91.

It could be argued that the Homeric war becomes fainter and fainter in the historians as the years pass by, and that the Homeric rivalry with which Herodotus was so concerned no longer preoccupies later Greek historians, let alone those at Rome. And yet the *Iliad* remains one of the major models for both Polybius' and especially Livy's accounts of the Hannibalic War. In his monumental monograph on Livy's third decade,<sup>18</sup> David Levene singles out a number of important junctures at which this heroic model is evoked, often with the primary intent of casting the Carthaginians as the (post-Homeric) barbaric Trojans of this 'epic' enterprise. Although, as has been mentioned,<sup>19</sup> Livy's Carthaginians are never explicitly referred to as barbarians, in striking contrast with other people (such as Spaniards, Gauls or Numidians), these Homeric references would seem to align them with both Trojans and Persians as the barbarian easterners of Roman Republican history.

One of the major similarities that both Polybius' and Livy's Carthaginians share with the Homeric Trojans is the ethnic mixture of their army, a fact that also constituted one of the main characteristics of the Persian army both in its 'cacophonous catalogue' in the *parodos* of Aeschylus' *Persae*<sup>20</sup> and in the juxtaposition between the paean sung by the Greeks at *Pers.* 393 and the Περσίδος γλώσσης ῥόθος ('noise of Persian tongue', *Pers.* 406) which marks the indistinct and unintelligible noise of an army whose contingents speak so many different languages.<sup>21</sup> In both Aeschylus and Polybius this characteristic of the Persian and Carthaginian armies seems to allude to Homer, and the latter also explicitly emphasises this debt with a composite quotation from two different books of the *Iliad* (*Il.* 4.437–8 and 2.804):<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Levene (2010).

<sup>19</sup> See Chapter 2, p. 130.

<sup>20</sup> E. Hall (1989) 78.

<sup>21</sup> Garvie (2009) 196. See also D'Huys (1990) 274. Cf. the *gentes* paying homage to Augustus on the shield of Aeneas: *A.* 8.723 *quam uariae linguis, habitu tam uestis et armis*, 'as diverse in their tongues as in their dress and arms'.

<sup>22</sup> See Levene (2010) 88–9 and D'Huys (1990) 270–4.

## Virgil's and Livy's Revisionism

... οἱ δὲ μισθοφόροι τῶν Καρχηδονίων ἀδιάκριτον ἐποίουν τὴν φωνὴν καὶ παρηλλαγμένην οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἦν κατὰ τὸν ποιητὴν ὁ αὐτὸς θροῦς οὐδ' ἴα γῆρυς, ἄλλη δ' ἄλλων γλῶσσα, πολύκλητοι δ' ἔσαν ἄνδρες

(Pol. 15.12.9)

... but the mercenaries of the Carthaginians raised a strange and undistinguishable confusion of shouts, for, as the poet says, their noise 'was not one speech, but their tongues were mixed, and the men had been summoned from many different lands'

In Polybius' presentation of the battle of Zama, genuinely historical reflections on the advantages and disadvantages of employing mercenary troops are entangled in a Gordian knot with the *exemplum* provided by Homeric epic, which supplies the poetic seal and justification to historical analysis. The same attitude is endorsed and expanded by Livy, who singles out more than once, and not without a moralising tone, 'the ethnic mixture of the Carthaginian army as a major weakness in their empire'.<sup>23</sup> This *turba ... mixta ex omni genere hominum*, 'crowd ... mixed of men of every race' (Liv. 26.20.9; cf. 22.43.2 *mixtos ex conluuione omnium gentium*, 'a mixed jumble of every kind of race') produces the discordant voice of Trojans and Persians when confronted at Zama with the *congruens clamor* of the united Republican army:<sup>24</sup>

congruens clamor ab Romanis eoque maior et terribilior, dissonae illis, ut gentium multarum discrepantibus linguis, uoces.

(Liv. 30.34.1)

The Romans shouted in unison, and consequently the cries were louder and more terrifying; on the other side the voices were discordant, a dissonant confusion of tongues of many people.

Livy's passage clearly reproduces the Homeric nuances of Polybius and of a previous tradition of historiography that emphasised both the role of mercenary troops in the Carthaginian army and the mixture of races that cast these troops in line with the Trojan-like mixed ethnicity of the

<sup>23</sup> Levene (2010) 303, and see the discussion at 243–4.

<sup>24</sup> See the discussion in Levene (2010) 88–90.

Persian contingents. In this way the historian manages to provide plausible historical reasons for the Carthaginians' defeat at Zama while at same time emphasising the solid, almost hoplitic nature of Roman Republican troops<sup>25</sup> in a period which was felt to be the zenith of Roman customs and military prowess and to contrast with the late Republican crisis that followed the destruction of Carthage. The interest of this passage lies not so much in Livy's use of an epic, Homeric model in his historiographical account of the battle, but rather in the appropriation of this model in the innumerable and especially historical mediations that can be found between Homer and Livy.

A little later in Book 30, Levene finds another Homeric quotation, this time lacking Polybian precedent, which equally casts the Carthaginians as Trojans. When the Carthaginians suddenly catch sight of the fire burning their ships, it is as painful to them as if Carthage itself were in flames:

... quarum conspectum repente incendium tam lugubre fuisse Poenis quam si ipsa Carthago arderet.

(Liv. 30.43.12)

... and as the Punics suddenly caught sight of the fire, it was as painful to them as if Carthage itself were burning.

Levene rightly flags up that this passage alludes to *Il.* 22.410–11, where the death of Hector produced such a mourning 'as though all beetling Ilios were utterly burning with fire' (τῷ δὲ μάλιστα ἄρ' ἔην ἐναλίγκιον, ὥς εἰ ἅπανα | Ἴλιος ὀφρυόεσσα πυρὶ σμύχοιτο κατ' ἄκρης), and he interprets the allusion within the 'broad alignment between Carthage and Troy'<sup>26</sup> which he has noticed running here and there throughout the decade.

And yet what Levene does not notice is that, just as the previous allusion seemed to look towards Polybius more than Homer himself, there is another 'window reference' here,<sup>27</sup> since for any reader of Augustan literature, and certainly for Macrobius (*Sat.* 4.6.5), this passage must rather bring to mind

<sup>25</sup> In line with Cato's attitude, see [Chapter 1](#), pp. 51–2.

<sup>26</sup> Levene (2010) 99.

<sup>27</sup> On the term see Thomas (1986).

the same Homeric quote used by Virgil for Carthage in the *Aeneid* rather than, or together with, the text of the *Iliad*. Indeed, in striking parallel with the end of Livy's third decade, the end of Virgil's Carthage episode also features the Carthaginians' response to the death of Dido as a double for the mourning of Hector in evoking the imaginary fall of Carthage, Tyre and Troy:<sup>28</sup>

non aliter, quam si immissis ruat hostibus omnis  
Karthago aut antiqua Tyros, flammaeque furentes  
culmina perque hominum uoluantur perque deorum.

(A. 4.669–71)

It was as though all Carthage or ancient Tyre were falling before the  
inrushing enemies, and fierce flames were rolling on over the roofs of  
men and gods.

In addition to this, Livy's passage may also bring to mind Dido's failed projects of burning the Trojan ships and murdering all her guests as a paradoxical synecdoche<sup>29</sup> for the complete destruction of their not yet founded city (A. 4.604–6 *faces in castra tulissem | implessemque foros flammis natumque patremque | cum genere exstinxem, memet super ipsa dedissem*, 'I should have taken torches to his camp and filled the decks of his ships with flames, killing the son with the father so as to wipe out the whole race, and then throw myself in the fire.').<sup>30</sup>

From a general point of view, these intertexts raise the issue of whether one can detect a similar pattern of rise and fall

<sup>28</sup> The passage links, also in linguistic terms, both the imagined and the historical falls of Carthage with the fall of Troy in Book 2: cf. A. 2.486–8 *at domus interior gemitu miseroque tumultu | miscetur, penitusque cauae plangoribus aedes | femineis ululant; ferit aurea sidera clamor*, 'but inside the house is all deranged with wailing and desperate screams, and deep into it the hollow chambers howl with the cries of women, and the shouting rises to strike the golden stars'.

<sup>29</sup> For a similar use of the *castra*, cf. Liv. 3.26.5 *itaque tantus pavor, tanta trepidatio fuit quanta si urbem, non castra hostes obsiderent*, 'and so the fear and consternation were so great that it seemed as if the enemies were besieging the city, rather than the camp'.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Mercury's advice to Aeneas at 4.566–8 *iam mare turbare trabibus saevasque uidebis | concludere faces, iam feruere litora flammis, | si te his attigerit terris Aurora morantem*, 'you will see her ships churning the sea and deadly torches blazing, and the shore seething with flames, if only dawn will find you still lingering in this land'.

in Livy's history of Hannibal and Virgil's story of Dido, a question that I shall address in due course.<sup>31</sup> But before even approaching this matter, the clear reluctance of scholarship to address the issue of the relationship between these two contemporary authors in itself deserves attention.

Like Sallust (*BJ* 1.1, cf. 5.1) and Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.1.1), Livy also famously begins his historiographical enterprise in dactylic rhythm (Liv. *Praef.* 1 *facturusne operae pretium sim si a primordio ...*, 'Whether I may accomplish anything worthy of the labour, if from the beginning ...') and with a probable Ennian reminiscence (Enn. fr. 46 Sk. *audire est operae pretium procedere recte | qui rem Romanam Latiumque augescere uoltis*, 'It is worth your while to listen, if you wish the Roman state to advance and Latium to grow').<sup>32</sup> Among the Greek historians, Thucydides had closed an important programmatic section of his preface with a dactylic 'coda' (Thuc. 1.21.2 δηλώσει ὁμῶς μείζων γεγενημένοσ ἀντῶν, 'it will appear to have been more important than those'),<sup>33</sup> but while both Thucydides' and Sallust's passages sound merely like recognitions of epic poetry as a genre which is not in conflict with historiography but may rather extol it and justify it, Livy's opening on the chords of Ennian epic more or less at the same time as another Latin author was addressing the same themes of his history in an epic which proposed itself as a substitute for the *Annales* (and perhaps an epic alternative to the *Ab Vrbe Condita* in its opening acrostic *Arma Virumque Cano*<sup>34</sup>) undoubtedly complicates the issue.

Before homing in on Virgil, it is worth wondering whether a general contrast emerges, in Livy's preface, between history and poetry, or history and myth. The contrast between *fama* and *historia*, interpreted according to their essentialist etymological roots of 'speaking' (from the Indo-European root \**fa-* 'to talk'<sup>35</sup>) and 'seeing' (from the Indo-European root \**weid*,

<sup>31</sup> See Chapter 4.5.

<sup>32</sup> See Moles (2009) 51–3.

<sup>33</sup> See Moles (1993) 103.

<sup>34</sup> Froesch (1991).

<sup>35</sup> See Miles (1995) 16.



'seeing' and thus 'inquire'<sup>36</sup>), is highlighted as early as Livy's *Praefatio*, and has been widely recognised by scholars.<sup>37</sup> In *Praefatio* 6 Livy claims that he will 'neither affirm nor refute' those adornments of poetic *fabulae* which characterise the most ancient period of Roman history – such *decora* stand in stark opposition to what we may recognise as his ambition to build an unbiased and documented history as an 'uncorrupted monument of *res gestae*':

quae ante conditam condendamue urbem poeticis magis decora fabulis quam incorruptis rerum gestarum monumentis traduntur, ea nec adfirmare nec refellere in animo est.

(Liv. *Praef.* 6)

Those traditions that belong to the time before the city was founded, or was to be founded, and are rather adorned with poetic fables than based upon uncorrupted records of events, I purpose neither to affirm nor to refute.

As Miles puts it, there is contrast here between Livy's uncorrupted written history (*incorruptis rerum gestarum monumentis*) and the corruptibility of oral tradition and performance (if we stress both the root \**fa-* in the term *fabulae*, 'fables' but also 'dramas', and the Herodotean influence in the passage<sup>38</sup>), which signals the distinction between historiography as a stable link to a past 'that is still available for direct, personal inspection' and oral composition as 'a series of independent repetitions, of retellings, each separated from the last', whose 'path is marked by a succession of ruptures [and] can guarantee no continuity between present and past'.<sup>39</sup>

The importance of 'seeing' for the historical objectivity of the *Ab Vrbe Condita* is stressed again in *Praefatio* 10, where Livy presents his History as a *monumentum* which cannot and

<sup>36</sup> On the topic see E. A. Clark (2004) 9–28.

<sup>37</sup> Miles (1995) 14–20, Jaeger (1997) 15–29, Feldherr (1998) 1–50, Hardie (2012) 229–31.

<sup>38</sup> Herod. 1.5.3. ταῦτα μὲν νῦν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι· ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτω ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, 'these are the tales told by the Persians and the Phoenicians; I, for my part, am not going to say that they happened in this or that way'.

<sup>39</sup> Miles (1995) 17.

does not speak, but is rather presented to the reader/viewer to be seen, enquired, analysed, interpreted:

hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu, foedum exitu, quod uites.

(Liv. *Praef.* 10)

What chiefly makes the study of history wholesome and profitable is this, that you behold specimens of every sort of example set forth as in a conspicuous monument; from these you may choose for yourself and for your own state what to imitate, and what, corrupt in its beginnings and corrupt in its outcome, to avoid.

Livy's conception of his literary achievement in the form of a *monumentum* brings readily to mind Horace's famous close of his three-book collection of *Odes*, in which he proclaims to have erected 'a monument more eternal than bronze' (*Carm.* 3.30.1 *Exegi monumentum aere perennius*). Yet the contrast, in Jaeger's view, between Livy's and Horace's monuments lies in the emphasis which the latter grants to the poet/builder (*Carm.* 3.30.1 *Exegi*) and the former to the viewers, insofar as 'Livy's words stress the active role that his audience must play to comprehend the past'.<sup>40</sup> In this way, history gains its much desired status of concrete, objective, 'real' document, in which the past is not *told* but rather *seen* 'as it actually occurred',<sup>41</sup> and is available for us to look at and analyse, in contrast to the artificial construction of a work of art which is the subjective, personal creation of a single individual poet. And yet it would be wrong to assume that Livy remains untouched by the 'plottings' of *fama*,<sup>42</sup> both in the sense of literary and historical 'renown' (and its allure) and in that of 'rumour' (a virtual synonym of *fabula*): rather, as Hardie puts it, he is 'complicit in the business of *fama* in ways that reach far beyond the need to confront the uncertainty of tradition'; he has a 'conscious

<sup>40</sup> Jaeger (1997) 23.

<sup>41</sup> *Wie es eigentlich gewesen*, Leopold von Ranke's famous dictum, in the preface to his *Geschichten der romanischen und germanischen Völker von 1494 bis 1514* (1885) 3rd ed. Leipzig, p. vii.

<sup>42</sup> To use Hardie's phrase (2012).

or half-conscious complicity' with *fama*-rumour while openly or half-openly aiming at *fama*-renown.<sup>43</sup> Even the apparently neutral use of *exemplum*, a pillar of the Roman historical tradition, may already be seen to betray the historian's practice of subjective and authoritative selection (witness its etymology from *eximo*, 'to take out', and its affinity with *existimare*, 'to evaluate').<sup>44</sup>

We can start seeing Livy's complicity in the workings of *fama*-rumour, and a tacit admission of the partly fictional nature of his narrative, when analysing his relationship with Virgil; however, such a relationship is one of desperate difficulty. Many scholars have tried to read a direct reference to Virgil in those poetic *fabulae* which Livy rejects and yet does not reject in his *Praefatio*. In 1949, an anonymous reviewer of Augusto Rostagni's 1942 short booklet on Virgil and Livy, which suggested that Virgil, especially in *Aeneid* 1, pays homage to Livy, and Livy responds in turn after the poet's death, could claim with excessive optimism that 'perhaps we have all felt that Virgil and Livy must be read together, and that they explain and enlighten each other's inspiration. But now everything is clear and satisfying.'<sup>45</sup> The question, as I hope to show, is not at all that simple: once it is agreed that there is a relationship between the two texts (a matter which is still under debate), the question becomes who alludes to whom, given the extreme uncertainty of Livy's dates of composition, not least the third decade. But the most difficult decision, and the most important for our purposes, is whether to share or to question Rostagni's view that the references of one author to the other are reverential, rather than problematic, controversial or even polemical.

The only apparently datable passage of the whole third decade is found in the middle of its second pentad. At 28.12.12, Livy states that Spain was conquered only in his times, 'under the command and auspices of Augustus Caesar' (*postrema*

<sup>43</sup> Hardie (2012) 230.

<sup>44</sup> See Habinek (1998) 46.

<sup>45</sup> (1949) Review of Augusto Rostagni 'Da Livio a Virgilio', *G&R* 18, 141–2.

*omnium nostra demum aetate ductu auspicioque Augusti Caesaris perdomita est*). However, it is unclear whether the passage refers to the campaigns of 26–25 BCE, when admittedly Augustus did not conquer Spain, since his illness forced him to interrupt the campaign and return to Rome in 25 BCE, or to the actual conquest of Spain after the campaigns of Agrippa in 19 BCE.<sup>46</sup> Stephen Oakley maintains that it was ‘written after the campaigns of 26–25 BCE and before the campaigns of Agrippa in 19 BCE’,<sup>47</sup> on the basis of Livy’s explicit and technical mention of Augustus’ command (*ductu*) in the text. This mention, however, does not completely rule out the possibility that Livy may be conflating Augustus’ and Agrippa’s campaigns, in the second case by using what La Penna calls the ‘teleology of imperial victory’,<sup>48</sup> according to which the generals in charge of the military operations are deemed merely the emperor’s ‘armed hands’, and the credit for the victory is ascribed to the Princeps himself. Thus Horace, in *Ode* 4.14, portrays the Cantabrians, ‘not previously tameable’, as now ‘marvelling’ at Augustus (41–3 *te Cantaber non ante domabilis* | ... *miratur*). This not only seems to contrast the view that Livy could speak of a ‘total subjugation’ of Spain (*perdomita*) after the campaigns of 26–25 BCE; Horace’s failure to mention Agrippa (combined with the image of the Cantabrian in admiration of Augustus) also seems designed to highlight that the credit for the success of the operation belongs to the emperor.<sup>49</sup> In Suetonius’ treatment of the matter, Augustus’ double role in the two campaigns is made explicit: *domuit autem partim ductu partim auspiciis suis Cantabriam* (‘in part as a leader, and in part through armies serving under his auspices, he subdued Cantabria’, Suet. *Aug.* 21). It is true that *ductu auspicioque* is a technical phrase that ‘implies that the army was personally commanded by the holder of *imperium*’,<sup>50</sup> and it is perhaps

<sup>46</sup> The passage is treated twice in Levene’s recent monograph, but in neither case is the dubious dating mentioned: Levene (2010) 79 and 350 n. 66.

<sup>47</sup> Oakley (1997) 109.

<sup>48</sup> La Penna (1963) 116; see Hor. *Carm.* 4.4 with Fedeli-Ciccarelli (2008).

<sup>49</sup> See Thomas (2011) 256.

<sup>50</sup> Ogilvie (1965) 392 on Livy 3.1.4; see also Hollis (1977) on Ovid *A. A.* 1.191 and Oakley (1998) 716–17 on Livy 8.31.1.

more sensible to imagine Livy exaggerating about a 'total subjugation' of Spain in 25 BCE (especially since the campaigns were hailed by Augustus himself as a great victory, not least in his autobiography<sup>51</sup>) rather than making no mention of Agrippa's command of the campaign in 19 BCE, but since the evidence remains uncertain, we cannot completely rule out the possibility that this passage was written after Virgil's death.

The relationship between *Aeneid* 1 and Livy's first pentad is just as difficult to establish. It was long assumed that composition of the first pentad could be dated with certainty as falling between 28 and 26 BCE on the basis of two passages that make reference to contemporary events: 4.20.5–11 records Caesar Augustus' (4.20.7 *Augustum Caesarem*) pronouncement that A. Cornelius Cossus was a consul when he dedicated a linen corselet in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius as part of the *spolia opima*, a statement which has been connected with a claim for the *spolia opima* made in 29 BCE by the proconsul of Macedonia M. Licinius Crassus; and 1.19.2–3 mentions the closing of the gates of Janus 'by the emperor Caesar Augustus' (1.19.3 *ab imperatore Caesare Augusto*) after the Actian War.<sup>52</sup> While the *terminus post quem* for these passages is 16 January 27 BCE (when Octavian assumed the title Augustus) and the *terminus ante quem* 25 BCE (when Augustus closed the gates of Janus a second time, following his subjugation of Spain), a compelling case can be – and has been – made that we are dealing with later insertions, probably added in the context of a revised edition of the first pentad, which would thus have originally been written before the battle of Actium.<sup>53</sup>

Even if one does not regard these passages as later insertions, it seems at any rate clear that the publication of the first pentad, even in its revised edition, must have predated Augustus' return from Spain in 25 BCE and therefore also Virgil's recitation of three books of the *Aeneid* to Augustus and Octavia, which allegedly took place after the emperor's

<sup>51</sup> See Aug. *RG* 26.2, with Cooley (2009) 220–1.

<sup>52</sup> Dessau (1906), see Ogilvie (1965) 563–4.

<sup>53</sup> Luce (1965), Woodman (1988) 134–5, Oakley (1997) 109–10.

return from the Cantabrian expedition (*Vita Donati* 31–2). In the light of this evidence, it seems reasonable to suppose, at least as far as the first pentad is concerned, that Livy's text was available for Virgil to engage with. This was Rostagni's view in 1942 when he discussed those passages in *Aeneid* 1 that seem closest to Livy's work: the reference to Padua in Venus' account of Antenor's story (*A.* 1.247–9 and *Liv.* 1.1–4, discussed below) and the parallel between Jupiter and Romulus Quirinus in prophesying Rome's universal dominion (*A.* 1.278–9 and *Liv.* 1.16.7).<sup>54</sup>

However, whereas Rostagni interpreted the Virgilian allusions to Livy as the poet's admiring homage to the historian, other studies have advanced rather different readings. Tony Woodman, for example, understands the relation between the two as a clash of perspectives: if Livy suspends judgement on the historical value of those poetic *fabulae* that adorned the ancient traditions of the Romans (followed by a critical observation on the 'mingling of divine things with human' that specifically 'anticipates a key element of the *Aeneid*',<sup>55</sup> assuming that the *Praefatio* postdates the first edition of the first pentad), Virgil is taken to have produced, in response, a 'sustained critique of Livy's description of events in his first pentad' at *A.* 8.630–62.<sup>56</sup>

A rereading of Virgil's allusion to the *Ab Vrbe Condita* in his account of the foundation of Padua may point in a similar direction. Venus cites the story of Antenor in explicit contrast to that of Aeneas, highlighting the fact that both authors start their works from the same point, but championing opposite versions of the story. The two passages deserve a closer look. Here is Virgil:

Antenor potuit, mediis elapsus Achiuis,  
Illyricos penetrare sinus atque intima tutus

<sup>54</sup> Rostagni (1942) 23–7, warmly endorsed in *G&R* 18 Issue 54 (1949) pp. 141–2.

<sup>55</sup> Woodman (1989) 140 on *Praef.* 6–7 *Datur haec uenia antiquitati, ut miscendo humana diuinis primordia urbium augustiora faciat*, 'let us grant this indulgence to antiquity, that by mixing divine affairs with human, it makes the origins of cities more august'.

<sup>56</sup> Woodman (1989) 139.

## Virgil's and Livy's Revisionism

regna Liburnorum et fontem superare Timaui,  
unde per ora nouem uasto cum murmure montis  
it mare proruptum et pelago premit arua sonanti.  
hic tamen ille urbem Pataui sedesque locauit  
Teucrorum et genti nomen dedit armaque fixit  
Troia, nunc placida compostus pace quiescit:  
nos, tua progenies, caelis quibus adnuis arcem,  
nauibus (infandum!) amissis unius ob iram  
prodimur atque Italīs longe disiungimur oris.

(*A.* 1.242–52)

Antenor could escape the Achaean host, make his way safely into the Illyrian gulfs and inmost realms of the Liburnians, and pass the springs of the Timavus, whence through nine mouths, with a mountain's mighty roar, a sea of water comes bursting out and buries the fields under its sounding ocean. Yet here he set Padua's town, a home for his Teucrians, gave a name to the people, and hung up the arms of Troy; now, settled in tranquil peace, he is at rest. But as for us, your offspring, to whom you grant a place in the citadel of heaven, we have lost our ships – O shame unutterable! – and, to appease one angry foe, are betrayed and kept far from the Italian shores.

And here Livy:

Iam primum omnium satis constat Troia capta in ceteros saeuitum esse Troianos: duobus, Aeneae Antenorique, et uetusti iure hospitii et quia pacis reddendaeque Helenae semper auctores fuerunt, omne ius belli Achiuos abstinuisse; casibus deinde uariis Antenorem cum multitudine Enetum ... uenisse in intimum maris Hadriatici sinum ... Aenean ab simili clade domo profugum, sed ad maiora rerum initia ducentibus fatis, primo in Macedonia uenisse, inde in Siciliam quaerentem sedes delatum, ab Sicilia classe ad Laurentem agrum tenuisse.

(*Liv.* 1.1–4)

First of all, then, it is generally agreed that, when Troy was taken, vengeance was wreaked upon the other Trojans; but two, Aeneas and Antenor, owing to the longstanding claims of hospitality, and because they had always advocated peace and the giving back of Helen, were spared all the penalties of war by the Achaeans. They then experienced various vicissitudes. Antenor, with a company of Eneti ... came to the inmost bay of the Adriatic ... Aeneas, driven from home by a similar misfortune, but guided by fate to undertakings of greater consequence, came first to Macedonia; thence was carried, in his quest of a place of settlement, to Sicily; and from Sicily laid his course towards the land of Laurentum.

Virgil's emphatic *primus* at the beginning of the *Aeneid* (*A.* 1.1–2 *Troiae qui primus ab oris | Italiam fato profugus ... uenit*, 'who first came to Italy from the shores of Troy, made an exile by fate') contradicts both Venus' and Livy's statement that 'first of all' (*iam primum omnium*)<sup>57</sup> the exiles from Troy who landed in Italy were actually 'two' (*duobus*), and Aeneas was by no means the first, but in terms of chronology he followed in Antenor's footsteps (*ab simili clade domo profugum*),<sup>58</sup> even though, as Livy emphasises, he was destined to much greater undertakings. Livy's decision to recount Antenor's journey and his settlement as chronologically preceding that of Aeneas clearly betrays the biased interests of a Paduan,<sup>59</sup> yet the ancient discussions of Virgil's choice of the adjective *primus* are already reported by Servius, who states that the poet might be excused in view of the fact that Antenor had not landed in Italy, but in Cisalpine Gaul, since at that time the boundary of Italy was marked by the Rubicon and not by the Alps (Serv. *ad A.* 1.1). The lack of any mention of Italy in Livy's text might invalidate the idea that the two authors are reporting contrasting traditions. Yet Virgil's choice of 'ignoring the tradition in the interests of his theme',<sup>60</sup> when read alongside Livy, sheds light on the fact that, at critical junctures in the epic, historical chronological hierarchies can be replaced with fictional ones.

But there is another puzzling element in these parallel accounts of the events, and here again Servius comes to our aid. Livy emphasises Aeneas' and Antenor's isolation from *ceteri Troiani* by recounting the notion that they shared 'long-standing claims of hospitality' with the Achaeans (*uetusti iure hospitii*) and had always advocated peace and the return of Helen. This passage must be read together with Venus' contention that Antenor 'managed to escape from the middle of the

<sup>57</sup> A recognised 'unusual opening of the history', Ogilvie (1965) 36–7.

<sup>58</sup> On Antenor's legend see Braccisi (1984) and Leigh (1998).

<sup>59</sup> See Feldherr (1998) 112–13; but also Leigh (1998) 98 on the implicit familiarity of Livy's readers with this tradition.

<sup>60</sup> Austin (1971) 28.



Achaeans' (*A.* 1.242 *Antenor potuit mediis elapsus Achiuis*) and with Servius' note:<sup>61</sup>

hi enim duo Troiam prodidisse dicuntur secundum Liuium, quod et Vergilius per transitum tangit, ubi ait 'se quoque permixtum agnouit Achiuis,' et excusat Horatius dicens 'ardentem sine fraude Troiam,' hoc est sine prodicione: quae quidem excusatio non uacat; nemo enim excusat nisi rem plenam suspicionis.

(Serv. *ad A.* 1.242)

In fact, according to Livy, these two [Antenor and Aeneas] are said to have betrayed Troy, a fact at which even Virgil hints when he says *se quoque principibus permixtum agnouit Achiuis* ['he recognised himself too, mixed in with the first of the Achaeans', *A.* 1.488], but which Horace denies with the phrase *ardentem sine fraude Troiam* [CS 41], that is, 'without betrayal'. Indeed not an idle justification: nobody excuses a matter unless it is full of suspicion.

This version of the events may also be alluded to by Turnus, when he bitterly refers to Aeneas as *desertor Asiae*, 'deserter of Asia' (*A.* 12.15).<sup>62</sup> Clearly, the beginning of the *Aeneid* makes Aeneas an 'exile by fate' (1.2 *fato profugus*) – 'rightly so', notes Servius, 'so that it wouldn't seem that he had left his country because of a crime'.<sup>63</sup> In Livy, the unbiased reliability of the historian meets the needs of Augustan 'propaganda': even though Aeneas' betrayal is partially acknowledged, since he admits that the two were allowed to get away because of their links with the Achaeans, the teleological significance of his journey and the epic role of fate is left undiminished: he is *domo profugus*, rather than *fato*, but guided by fate to greater undertakings (*domo profugum, sed ad maiora rerum initia ducentibus fati*).

In this passage, Woodman's conviction that the dialogue between the two is polemical does not find any immediate confirmation. Rather, Virgil and Livy are reporting the same dubious traditions, and both stress the influence of 'pro-Aeneas',

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Servius *ad A.* 1.488 and Ps.-Acro *ad CS* 41. On Aeneas' betrayal of Troy, see Galinsky (1969a) 46–52, Ahl (1989) 24–30, Casali (1999).

<sup>62</sup> See Casali (1999), Thomas (2001) 71–3, O'Hara (2007) 87, Tarrant (2012) 90. Arguably *desertor* is not equivalent to *proditor*, 'betrayed', but they are very often coupled: see Oakley (2005) 84 on Livy 9.4.14 *deserimus ac prodimus*.

<sup>63</sup> Serv. *ad A.* 1.2 *bene addidit 'fato', ne uideatur aut causa criminis patriam deseruisse*.

if not 'Augustan', propaganda in their respective accounts. The theme of uncertainty finds explicit acknowledgement soon thereafter, with the first appearance of *fama* after the *Praefatio*, when Livy stresses that, on the (hi)story of Aeneas and Latinus, (the) *fama* is *duplex* (Liv. 1.1.6 *duplex inde fama est*), a statement which is as true for the Latinus episode as for the story of Antenor.<sup>64</sup> The dialogue between these two authors, far from being either simply reverential or polemical, rates instead as a joint reflection on the respective limits and fields of action of history and epic within Augustan historical revisionism. The *duplex fama* of the *Ab Urbe Condita* is akin to the *Fama* which mixes *facta atque infecta*, 'truth and falsehood', in the fourth book of the *Aeneid* (*A.* 4.190). Although one should not forget that Livy is especially concerned about the unreliability of the pre-regal period, I shall argue that the same *fama/Fama* shapes both Livy's account of the beginning of the Hannibalic War and Virgil's myth of Aeneas and Dido, emphasising the difficulty and ultimately the impossibility of narrating past history in either poetic or historical terms, when both the recent past of the Civil Wars and the present of the Augustan Principate *turn* every 'objective' history into a story, and shift the reader's attention from Livy's stable and concrete *monumentum* to the *linguistic* structure and subjective composition of the inscription there engraved.

### 3.3 The Poet: *Fama* and the Cause in Virgil's Carthage

The paramount importance of *Fama* in Virgil's Carthage episode, which stages its personification at *A.* 4.173–97, was highlighted by Philip Hardie in *Cosmos and Imperium*,<sup>65</sup> and more recently in *Rumour and Renown*, which explores both the metapoetic nuances of Virgil's *Fama* and its significance in a mythical tale that, by subverting the traditional chronology in view of its higher aims, is a 'daring invention',

<sup>64</sup> See Hardie (2012) 244.

<sup>65</sup> Hardie (1986) 273–80.

indeed made of *facta atque infecta* (4.190).<sup>66</sup> Alongside the discussion of personified *Fama* and of *fama*-as-fame, the book also considers at length the role of *fama*-as-rumour in the construction of the Carthaginian episode. *Fama* in its double manifestation frames the whole episode, from Aeneas' arrival in Book 1 (*A.* 1.378–9 *sum pius Aeneas ... fama super aethera notus*, 'I am pious Aeneas, known by Fame beyond the heavens') to the death of Dido at the end of Book 4 (*A.* 4.666 *concussam bacchatur fama per urbem*, 'Rumour riots like a Maenad throughout the city'),<sup>67</sup> a frame which, surprisingly, we also find in the preamble to Livy's Hannibalic War in Book 21 (see below).

As regards the characters of Aeneas and Dido, it is mostly *fama* as glory (and, for Dido, as *pudor*) that plays a significant role in the episode. However, when we focus on the narrative rather than the characters, it is *fama*-as-rumour that stands out most from the picture. In fact, the whole of Books 2 and 3, the almost historical narrative of the fall of Troy and the fantastic account of Aeneas' journey in the wonderlands, must be considered 'plots of *fama*' rather than objective accounts, especially since, as has long been observed, these *fabulae* are narrated by one of the least impartial characters of the story for an intended Carthaginian audience, and Aeneas' speech in Book 2 in particular often betrays its subjective viewpoint through its apologetic nature.<sup>68</sup> Preceded by Hexter and Clément-Tarantino, Hardie also considers the episode of Sinon at the start of *Aeneid* 2 as paradigmatic for the subsequent interventions of *fama* as the 'distorted word' and its 'destructive effects' in *Aeneid* 4:<sup>69</sup> the story *narrated* by Sinon, in its turn included in the partial *narration* of Aeneas, triggers a sort of Chinese whispers around those mythical *fabulae* that lie behind the origins of history.

<sup>66</sup> Hardie (2012) 110. See also Clément-Tarantino (2006) and (2009), Syson (2013) 44–62.

<sup>67</sup> Hardie (2012) 95–6.

<sup>68</sup> See Ahl (1989) 24–31 and Powell (2011); although the speech has also been compared to the *rheis* of a tragic messenger, and in particular to the one of Aeschylus' *Persae*: see Ussani (1950), Rossi (2004a) 52.

<sup>69</sup> Hexter (1990), Clément-Tarantino (2006) 614–17, Hardie (2012) 73–7.

In addition, Hardie directs attention to the corruptible nature of reported speech as highlighted in *Aeneid* 4 by a comparison between Jupiter's speech to Mercury at 223–37 and Mercury's failure to reproduce Jupiter's words faithfully to Aeneas at 263–76. Coluccio Salutati, in a comparison between Virgil's and Homer's use of repetitions (*De Laboribus Herculis* 1.2.7), had already noticed how Mercury changes Jupiter's *quid struit? aut qua spe inimica in gente moratur*, 'what is he about? What does he hope for by lingering among hostile people?' (*Aen.* 4.235) into *quid struis? aut qua spe Libycis teris otia terris?* 'what are you about? What do you hope for by wasting time in idleness in the Libyan land?' (4.271), but a detailed discussion of Mercury's personal intervention in this reported speech was only provided in 1999 by Andrew Laird, who chose this passage as one of the most telling pieces of evidence of Virgil's awareness of the openly fictitious nature of his *Aeneid*, where *Fama* 'is not only a character in the story ... [but] also a formal component of the narrative'.<sup>70</sup> This specific change of Mercury's may be deemed necessary, since the hostile nature of the Carthaginians is known to the omniscient Jupiter, but will only become a reality for Aeneas after the events of Book 4 will have taken place. However, in *Rumour and Renown*, the partiality of Mercury as a reporter, emphasised from his very first words, which include both Mercury's own observations (265–6 *tu nunc Karthaginis altae | fundamenta locas*, 'you are now establishing the foundations of haughty Carthage'; cf. 260–1 *Aenean fundantem arces ac tecta nouantem | conspicit*, 'he sees Aeneas building citadels and restoring the houses')<sup>71</sup> and a 'tendentious gloss, in the manner of *Fama* or Iarbas, on Aeneas' behaviour'<sup>72</sup> (266 *pulchramque uxori urbem | extruis?* 'you, ruled by your wife, are building her beautiful city?'), demonstrates that 'even the messenger of Jupiter', who embodied the 'unperverted word' in direct contrast to *Fama* in *Cosmos and Imperium*,<sup>73</sup> is after all 'not above giving his own twist

<sup>70</sup> Laird (1999) 273.

<sup>71</sup> Laird (1999) 270.

<sup>72</sup> Hardie (2012) 94.

<sup>73</sup> Hardie (1986) 278.

or elaboration to the word of the supreme god'.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, Hardie accepts the bulk of Laird's considerations, letting 'the simple contrast between the crooked speech of *Fama* and the straight talking of Mercury ... break down' – a break in the wall of Jupiter's *Cosmos* that partially lets *fama*-as-rumour/ reported-speech-as-historical-revisionism take the stage of Virgil's Carthage episode under the mask of *Fama*-as-fame. In other words, alongside the 'constructive' metapoetic significance of *Fama* in the love story between Aeneas and Dido, whose mixture of truth and falsehood will assure poetic fame for its author, there comes a 'destructive' potential of *Fama* as the monstrous product of an era that is able to wipe out the preceding mythical *fabulae* and historical events in order to (re) construct and (re)write both myth and history in a renewed, or simply new, form.<sup>75</sup>

It is against this importance of *Fama* in highlighting Virgil's rewriting of the myth that I argue we should interpret the so-called riddle of the *septima aestas*, the 'seventh summer' of Aeneas' wanderings, which is identified both with the period spent in Carthage in Book 4 and with the time of the Sicilian Games in Book 5, even though there is also explicit mention of the fact that Aeneas remained in Carthage during the intervening winter.<sup>76</sup>

The first appearance of the *septima aestas* comes towards the close of Book 1, when Dido informs us that this is the seventh summer of Aeneas' voyages:

nam te iam *septima* portat  
omnibus errantem terris et fluctibus *aestas*.

(A. 1.755–6)

For it is now the *seventh summer* that carries you as a wanderer over every land and sea.

<sup>74</sup> Hardie (2012) 94.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Arendt (1961) 87: 'The totalitarian systems tend to demonstrate that action can be based on any hypothesis and that, in the course of consistently guided action, the particular hypothesis will become true, will become actual, factual reality.' I explore this parallel more thoroughly in Giusti (2016c).

<sup>76</sup> According to Servius, *ad A.* 5.656, 'one of those insoluble problems that Virgil would have no doubt emended' had he perfected the poem; see also Williams (1960) xxx.

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The fact that the shipwreck happened during the summer also seems to be confirmed by Ilioneus' statement that the storm was brought by the rising Orion (1.535–6), a constellation that rises at midsummer (Ov. *Fast.* 6.719).<sup>77</sup>

The *septima aestas* reappears towards the close of Book 5, when Iris, Juno's messenger, disguised as Beroe in her speech to the Trojan women, states that the seventh summer of Aeneas' wanderings is still running:

*septima post Troiae excidium iam uertitur aestas*

(*A.* 5.626)

The seventh summer is now on the wane since Troy's overthrow

At the beginning of the same book, readers have also been informed that one year has passed since the death of Anchises:

*annuus exactis compleitur mensibus orbis,  
ex quo reliquias diuinique ossa parentis  
condidimus terra maestaque sacrauimus aras;*

(*A.* 5.46–8)

With the passing of the months the circling year draws to an end  
since we laid in earth the dust, all that was left, of my divine father,  
and hallowed the altars of grief;

According to these passages, the most plausible reconstruction would force us to suppose that Aeneas' stay at Carthage could have been no longer than two or three months: Anchises died at the close of the sixth summer; the Trojans then stayed in Sicily until the beginning of the following summer, before the storm washed them up in Carthage; there they lingered for a few months, before getting back to Sicily for the anniversary of Anchises' death, namely the end of the seventh summer. However, this reconstruction, which was proposed by Potter in 1926 and warmly welcomed by Conway in 1931,<sup>78</sup> encounters more than one difficulty. Not only does Virgil fail to provide any hint of the length of Aeneas' stay in Sicily after the death

<sup>77</sup> See Heinze (1993) 284. Austin (1971) 175 remarks that Orion's setting, not its rising, is normally associated with storms, quoting *A.* 7.719 and Hor. *Carm.* 3.27.17–18.

<sup>78</sup> Potter (1926), Conway (1931b).

of his father,<sup>79</sup> but he also inserts in Book 4 more than one reference to the winter season, references that Potter's analysis does not manage to explain satisfactorily. In fact, whereas it is true enough that, in Anna's speech to Dido, *hiems* may be taken to refer to the tempest of Book 1 (*A.* 4.51–2 *indulge hospitio causasque innecte morandi, | dum pelago desaeuit hiems et aquosus Orion*, 'indulge him with hospitality, and spin out reasons for him to delay, while the stormy season and rainy Orion rage on the sea'), this is not the case for the rumours that *Fama* disseminates after the union in the cave:

nunc *hiemem* inter se luxu, quam longa, fouere  
(*A.* 4.193)

Now they spend the *winter*, all its length, in wanton ease together

Potter defends his thesis first on the basis that the reports of *Fama* are unreliable,<sup>80</sup> and then by interpreting the verb *fouere* in the sense of 'cherish in anticipation', a reading which is in his view supported by *A.* 1.18 *iam tum tenditque fouetque*.<sup>81</sup> This reading, however, though mentioned by Pease, is not generally accepted by other commentators, who either read *fouere* with *hiemem* in the sense of 'keep the winter warm' ('i.e. they pass it comfortably'<sup>82</sup>), or *hiemem* as accusative of duration of time,<sup>83</sup> so the *inter se ... fouere* would refer to 'embraces and fondling on the part of Aeneas and Dido'.<sup>84</sup>

Another problematic passage for Potter's reconstruction appears later in the book, in Dido's complaint to Aeneas:

quin etiam *hiberno* moliris *sidere* classem  
et mediis properas Aquilonibus ire per altum,  
crudelis?  
(*A.* 4.309–11)

<sup>79</sup> Cf. *A.* 3.714–15 with W. P. Clark (1932) 499: 'that readers do get the impression that the departure from Sicily took place soon after the death of Anchises is proved by the fact that so many have done it'.

<sup>80</sup> See *contra* W. P. Clark (1932) 501: 'gossip tends to deal with things that either have been or have not been (*facta, infecta* of 190), not things that are going to be'.

<sup>81</sup> Potter (1926) 621 n. 6.

<sup>82</sup> Austin (1955) 73.

<sup>83</sup> Page (1923) 359.

<sup>84</sup> Pease (1935) 223.

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Why, even in the *winter season*, do you labour at your fleet, and hasten to go to sea in the mist of northern winds, heartless one?

Here, Potter connects the passage to Anna's reference to *hiems* at 4.52, and interprets *hiberno ... sidere* as an indication of a stormy season, one unsuitable for sea travel, rather than a chronological reference to winter.

Because of these difficulties, Potter's interpretation has not been generally accepted, and other explanations have been proposed for solving this chronological riddle. Whereas Mandra thought to solve the problem by interpreting *aestas* as 'year',<sup>85</sup> Quinn suggested that while Dido meant 'it is now six years since Troy fell', the false Beroe meant 'we have been wandering the seas for six years', supposing that one year, summed up at *A.* 3.1–12, passed between the fall of Troy and the departure of the Aeneidae.<sup>86</sup> Finally, it is worth mentioning the most recent interpretation of Julia Dyson, who, influenced by the studies of Jim O'Hara,<sup>87</sup> believes that 'the inconsistency intentionally marks the phrase *septima aestas* in order to highlight the theme of sacrificial death', since the seventh summer in *G.* 4.207 refers to 'the inevitable terminus of the individual bee's life' in contrast to the immortal life of its community, a contrast which 'could be called the prevailing theme of the *Aeneid*'.<sup>88</sup>

In line with O'Hara and Dyson, I also consider the riddle of the *septima aestas* a deliberate inconsistency, but I argue that it draws attention to another chronological inconsistency present in Virgil's myth of Aeneas and Dido. In my view, the repetition of *septima aestas*, which eliminates any temporal interval between *A.* 1.755–6 and 5.626, must be read as a phrase that highlights the lack of a spacial progression from Book 1 to Book 5, since both books find Aeneas in Sicily. The reason for this annihilation of both time and space in the first four books of the *Aeneid* can arguably be found in the fictitious nature of

<sup>85</sup> Mandra (1934) 90–1.

<sup>86</sup> Quinn (1967) 128.

<sup>87</sup> O'Hara (1990); cf. (2007) 93 n. 39.

<sup>88</sup> Dyson (1996) 41–2.



the episode in Carthage. Time is the reason why Aeneas and Dido could never have met, historically speaking: everyone knew that Troy fell in 1184 BCE and Carthage was founded in 814 BCE. As Macrobius says, the encounter is 'a fable, that everyone knows to be false' (*Sat.* 5.17.5 *fabula, quam falsam nouit universitas*).<sup>89</sup> In the light of the chronological gap between Aeneas and Dido in the historical tradition, the *septima aetas* riddle turns into a virtually nonexistent problem. What Iris, disguised as Beroe, tells us in Book 5, acting as the mouthpiece of Juno/Tanit, patron goddess of Carthage, is that the encounter between Aeneas and the queen actually, i.e. *historically*, never took place, since this is still the seventh summer of Aeneas' wanderings. This belief is in direct contrast with the words of the Virgilian *Fama*, which implies instead, mixing *facta atque infecta* and contributing to enact Jupiter's plan, that the seventh summer has passed, when it tells us that *now* (4.193 *nunc*) Aeneas and Dido are already warming the winter with their fondling.

It is no coincidence, I think, that it is *Fama* who takes responsibility for making time come to a halt in Carthage, in the same way as, by mixing truth and falsehood, it subverts the traditional dating of Aeneas' and Dido's respective myths in order to create a plausible but fictional *aition* for an historical conflict. The orthodox variants of the stories of Aeneas and Dido have been replaced by this new, 'Augustan', *Fama* tradition, and the *septima aetas* riddle emphasises this substitution, highlighting the fictional nature of the story. This fictionality may sound more acceptable as long as epic is concerned, yet I am going to argue that historiography may work in a not dissimilar way, especially in relation to chronological inconsistencies. In the case of the outbreaks of conflicts, disputes over time are often at stake in assessing the guilt of either party: for a contemporary historical example, it suffices to think of the controversy over the time of the message warning of the attack on Pearl Harbor. In the Hannibalic War,

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Hexter (1992) 338: 'those who brought the two together ... were clearly recognized to be writing fiction, not history'.

both time and geography prove vital for a correct understanding of the causes of the conflict, and for deciding whether the Carthaginians or the Romans are to blame.

I have already argued, in relation to a text as early as Plautus' *Poenulus*, that the historical space devoted to Carthage was turned by the post-Hannibalic War Romans into what I defined a 'cultural lacuna',<sup>90</sup> and this is all the more true after its complete destruction in 146 BCE and its subsequent Romanisation in the Augustan age. If it can be admitted that one of the goals achieved by the Romans through the three Punic Wars was to erase the city from historical archives, then the role of *Fama*-rumour at the core of this episode acquires even more significance for Carthage and its queen. As Hardie emphasises, the *Fama* mixing truth and falsehood is a patent double for the poet subverting the historical chronology in order to build up the fictitious love story of Dido and Aeneas and transform the 'historical' Punic queen, who committed suicide in order to remain faithful to the ashes of her husband, into her poetic Roman counterpart. *Fama*, as both Clément-Tarantino and Hardie rightly stress, is 'tradition', but tradition itself has been thought by Hannah Arendt to be one of the most daring inventions of the Romans.<sup>91</sup> In sharing a Roman 'copyright', tradition is entwined with the other properly Roman concept of authority,<sup>92</sup> and it is partly with an awareness of the intrinsically Roman nature of both tradition and authority that the authors of the Augustan age can portray an authoritarian *Fama* and turn it to the age's own means, bringing out its full tyrannical and arbitrary potential. Clearly, tradition needs *authors* to codify it, since only an authorial mind can choose among the products of *fama*-rumour in order to build up *Fama* tradition, operating a selective and at the same time creative process which is as valid for myth as it is for history.<sup>93</sup> In the case of Carthage, while the Punic story of chaste Dido

<sup>90</sup> Chapter 1.5, p. 87.

<sup>91</sup> See Arendt (1961) 25.

<sup>92</sup> Arendt (1961) 104.

<sup>93</sup> On the *Aeneid* as 'pas "une" ou "des" mais "la" tradition', see Clément-Tarantino (2006) 27–8.

was erased by Virgil and his poetic *Fama* and replaced with the Roman story of lascivious Dido, the history of the Second Punic War and its Carthaginian commander also becomes entangled in the workings of Livy's *Fama* in order to construct a Roman history of the causes and development of a war in which the Romans fought an almost mythical, bogeyman-like adversary. In what follows, I shall analyse a section of Livy's Book 21 which is framed by accounts of *fama* and argue that the importance of *fama* in the episode serves not to connect directly Livy's text to Virgil's, but to show that there is an awareness, in both authors, of how their respective works actively contribute to, and are at the same time shaped by, this rebuilding of Rome's 'tradition' in the early Principate, be that in the form of history or myth, historiography or epic poetry.<sup>94</sup>

### 3.4 The Historian: *Fama* and the Pretext in Livy 21

The first twenty-two chapters of Livy's third decade (21.1–22) can be considered a unified episode that I will from now on call the 'preamble' to the Hannibalic War. The choice of singling out these chapters as a unit is liable to appear highly subjective and artificial, since what may seem the most natural watershed between the preamble and the war, Rome's war declaration, comes in chapter 18, with Quintus Fabius' folding and subsequent unfolding of his toga,<sup>95</sup> which marks the tragic point of no return, perhaps looking forward to Cato's famous shaking of his toga when dropping the Libyan fig in the Senate (Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 27.1 τὴν τῆβεννον ἀναβαλόμενον), and therefore to Carthage's inevitable doom.<sup>96</sup> The suggestion that the Hannibalic War starts here may be further confirmed

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Habinek (1998) 54: 'Latin literature of the early classical period both participates in the invention of tradition and makes itself a part of the tradition that is being invented. In this way it secures for itself a permanent role as an agent of aristocratic acculturation.'

<sup>95</sup> Liv. 21.18.13 *tum Romanus sinu ex toga facto, 'Hic' inquit, 'uobis bellum et pacem portamus; utrum placet sumite'*, 'then the Roman, folding his toga, said: "here we bring you war and peace; choose what you prefer!"; 18.14 *et cum is iterum sinu effuso bellum dare dixisset, accipere se omnes responderunt*, 'and when he, shaking out the fold again, announced that he gave them war, they all replied that they accepted it'.

<sup>96</sup> On the scene see O'Gorman (2004) 107–10.

by the beginning of 19, opening on the notes of the *denuntiatio belli* (21.19.1). However, the engine of the action has not yet been properly fired up, since another double pair of chapters, 19–20 and 21–22, dedicated to Roman and Carthaginian preparations respectively, delay the action, acting as a coda to this preamble. There is, as it were, a strong feeling that the actions described in 19–20 and 21–22 happen simultaneously rather than in chronological order, both leading with suspense towards Hannibal's crossing of the Ebro as the actual criss-cross of Roman expectations and Carthaginian actions and starting point of the war. If so, the narration would close in full circle with the breaking of the Ebro treaty with whose recounting it had opened,<sup>97</sup> leaving no doubt this time that Hannibal has violated Hasdrubal's pact. The crossing of the river Ebro, which signals the transgression into the state of war, is inserted by Livy at the end of 21.20 in the words of *fama* running through the mouths of the people of Rome (21.20.9, more below), but only to be delayed again to the beginning of chapter 23. Here the suspense is finally broken and the war unquestionably begins, when Hannibal leads his troops across the Ebro in Caesar's favourite three-columned array<sup>98</sup> (21.23.1 *hoc uisu laetus tripertito Hiberum copias traiecit*, 'rejoicing at this vision, he led his troops across the Ebro in three columns').

In addition, what makes 21.1–22 look like an episode in itself is a striking parallel between two episodes, Hannibal's oath in chapter 1 and Hannibal's dream in 22, whose function in framing and isolating this section has already been recognised by Giovanni Cipriani.<sup>99</sup> Both episodes, which I believe can be recognised as '*fama* episodes', have curiously escaped Hardie's attention in his chapter of *Rumour and Renown* dedicated to *Fama* in Livy,<sup>100</sup> perhaps because they differ slightly from the formulation of '*fama* episodes' given in the book. According

<sup>97</sup> Liv. 21.2.7 *foedus renouauerat populus Romanus ut finis utriusque imperii esset annis Hiberus*, 'the Roman people had renewed the treaty, with the stipulation that the river Ebro acted as the border of each dominion'.

<sup>98</sup> See Walsh (1961) 203 and (1973) 134.

<sup>99</sup> Cipriani (1984).

<sup>100</sup> Hardie (2012) 244–72.

to Hardie, '*fama* episodes' are 'localized concentrations' of *fama* vocabulary in Livy, 'sometimes in the form of small-scale narratives, with distinct beginnings and endings, although the endings are often provisional, and subject to subsequent re-opening'.<sup>101</sup> Two examples of '*fama* episodes' treated by Hardie, the bestowal on Scipio of the cognomen 'Africanus' at 30.45 and his death at 38.54–60, are centred on Africanus and his *fama*-glory, yet *fama*-rumour also features in some of the episodes of the third decade, as in the rumours of Scipio's illness at 28.24–5 or in those surrounding the Alps in Feldherr's reading of the '*fama* episode' of Hannibal's march in Book 21.<sup>102</sup> The preamble to the war, however, differs slightly from these episodes insofar as it is not a small-scale narrative centred on *fama* vocabulary, but rather a relatively large-scale narrative of the outbreak of the war (with the Saguntum episode at its core) framed, in chapters 1 and 22, by two unhistorical anecdotes which are explicitly presented as storytellings of *fama*, both being introduced by the revealing phrase *fama est* (21.1.4 and 21.22.6).

Before moving on to the episodes, it is worth anticipating that the preamble to the Hannibalic war seems to testify to Livy's subversion of an allegedly objective method of historiography and to a negation of Polybius' belief in the possibility of constructing a 'truthful' history of Rome's dominion. *Fama est*, the introductory phrase of both the anecdotes of Hannibal's oath as a boy (21.1.4–5) and of his dream before crossing the Alps (21.22.6–9), signposts Livy's digression from the strict practice of allegedly 'truthful' historiography, and warns the reader about his complex relationship with Polybius, anticipating the famous methodological divergences between their respective accounts of Hannibal's crossing of the Alps, analysed at length by Levene.<sup>103</sup> It is indeed noteworthy that Livy gives an appreciation of Polybius' work only once in the whole decade, 'saving his face' in a brief reference to the Greek predecessor at the very end of his work (30.45.5). In the scholarly analyses

<sup>101</sup> Hardie (2012) 245–6.

<sup>102</sup> Feldherr (2009).

<sup>103</sup> Levene (2010) 152–5.

of the relationship between the two,<sup>104</sup> it goes unremarked that this last-minute mention of Polybius reads not so much as a homage, but rather as a poignant double-edged acknowledgement which works as an icon for Livy's ambiguous reception of Polybius' methodologies. This may be emphasised by the ironic use of litotes, working here almost as a 'Freudian negation': Polybius, far from being Cicero's *bonus auctor in primis* ('one of the very best authorities', Cic. *De Off.* 3.32), has now become nothing more than an 'author by no means to be despised' (30.45.5 *haudquaquam spernendus auctor*), a negation similarly repeated in the next decade, where he is again acknowledged as a 'not uncertain author' (33.10.10 *Polybium secuti sumus, non incertum auctorem*). Thus Polybius is not, or at least not only, an *authority*, but himself a storyteller, creator and *augmentator* of his own version of historical facts no less than any other writer engaged with the rewriting of history. The fact that, in Livy, the separate account of the causes of the war, traditionally the primary and most delicate factor for an historian to expound in any analysis of war politics,<sup>105</sup> is inscribed into this air of mysterious and folkloric storytelling goes hand in hand with Livy's recognisably tendentious reading of the causes of the war, with the fictitious chronology that he admits putting forward, and with the clear epic and tragic features which characterise the unfolding of this supposedly historical narrative, all facts that show how Livy is engaged not so much with the *tractatio* but rather with the *retractatio* of the Hannibalic War.

It is worth taking a close look at both '*fama* episodes', starting with Hannibal's oath:

*Fama est etiam Hannibalem annorum ferme nouem, pueriliter blandientem patri Hamilcari ut duceretur in Hispaniam, cum perfecto Africo bello exercitum eo traiecturus sacrificaret, altaribus admotum tactis sacris iure iurando adactum se cum primum posset hostem fore populo Romano.*

(Liv. 21.1.4)

<sup>104</sup> See Briscoe (1993) and Tränkle (2009).

<sup>105</sup> See Herodotus (1.1.1 δι' ἣν αἰτίην), Thucydides 1.23.6 on the ἀληθεστάτη πρόφασις of the Peloponnesian War and Polybius' theory of causation at 3.6.3 with Walbank (1972) 157–60.

*There is a rumour* moreover that when Hannibal, then about nine years old, was childishly teasing his father Hamilcar to take him into Spain, his father, who had finished the African War and was sacrificing, before crossing over with his army, led the boy up to the altar and made him touch the offerings and bind himself with an oath that as soon as he should be able he would be the declared enemy of the Roman people.

This story was already present in Polybius (Pol. 3.11), but it was there narrated by Hannibal himself to Antiochus, in order to counter the pro-Roman charges that Antiochus had suspiciously brought against him; as such, the episode also comes back, this time in the mouth of Hannibal, in Livy 35.19. Thus, Livy's innovation lies not in the anecdote itself, but in presenting it through the mouth of *fama* and in transforming it into the signature tune of the whole account of the war. In addition, Livy here already points towards a mythologisation of Hannibal 'the bogeyman': whereas in Polybius Hannibal swears 'never to be well-inclined towards the Romans' (Pol. 3.11.7 ὁμύναι μηδέποτε Ῥωμαίοις εὐνοήσειν) and in his recounting of the episode to Antiochus in Livy he swears 'never to be friends with them' (Liv. 35.19.3 *nunquam amicum fore populi Romani*), here he is instead forced (*adactum*), both by his father and by a destiny he does not seem to have chosen, to become 'the enemy of the Roman people' (*se cum primum posset hostem fore populo Romano*), namely to 'embody the martial stance of an entire nation'.<sup>106</sup> Hannibal the boy is led close to the altar (*admotus*, as Cipriani notes, a participle normally reserved for sacrificial victims<sup>107</sup>) and allegorically sacrificed for Hannibal the *dux* to be born. Whereas Dido pronounced no oath against the Trojans at Aulis (*A.* 4.425–6 *non ego cum Danais Troianam exscindere gentem | Aulide iuravi classemue ad Pergama misi*, 'I did not swear a oath at Aulis, along with the Greeks, to wipe out the Trojan race, nor did I send a fleet to Pergamum'), the vengeful demon whose birth she invokes in her poetic oath-curse (*A.* 4.625) has now reemerged in historiographical clothing precisely from an oath against the Romans.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Cipriani (1984) 20.

<sup>107</sup> Cipriani (1984) 27–8.

<sup>108</sup> For a conflation of Dido's curse and Hannibal's oath, see the opening of Silius' *Punica* (1.21–55).

Hannibal's devotion to the gods is also emphasised in the second tale of *Fama*, the narration of his dream before crossing the Alps:

*fama est* in quiete uisum ab eo iuuenem diuina specie qui se ab Ioue diceret ducem in Italiam Hannibali missum; proinde sequeretur neque usquam a se deflecteret oculos. pauidum primo, nusquam circumspicientem aut respicientem, secutum; deinde cura ingenii humani cum, quidnam esset quod respicere uetitus esset, agitaret animo, temperare oculis nequiuisset; tum uidisse post sese serpentem mira magnitudine cum ingenti arborum ac uirgultorum strage ferri ac post insequi cum fragore caeli nimbū. tum quae moles ea quidque prodigii esset quaerentem, audisse uastitatem Italiae esse; pergeret porro ire nec ultra inquireret sineretque fata in occulto esse.

(Liv. 21.22.5–9)

*There is a rumour* that he saw in his sleep a youth of godlike aspect, who declared that he was sent by Jupiter to lead him into Italy: he had to follow him, therefore, nor anywhere turn his eyes away from him. At first he was afraid and followed, neither looking to the right nor to the left, nor yet behind him; but presently wondering, with that curiosity to which all of us are prone, what it could be that he had been forbidden to look back upon, he was unable to command his eyes; then he saw behind him a serpent of monstrous size, that moved along with vast destruction of trees and underbrush, and a storm cloud coming after, with loud claps of thunder; and, on his asking what this prodigious portent was, he was told that it was the devastation of Italy: he was therefore to go on, nor enquire further, but suffer destiny to be wrapped in darkness.

Here again, Livy's innovations are noteworthy. The same anecdote has survived in Cicero, who recounts it as a story found in Coelius, who was following Silenus (*Diu.* 1.49 *hoc item in Sileni, quem Coelius sequitur, Graeca historia est*). Only in Livy, however, and not in Cicero, is the dream preceded by mention of Hannibal's visit to the temple of Hercules at Gades/Cadiz (21.21.9 *Hannibal cum recensuisset omnium gentium auxilia, Gades profectus Herculi uota exsoluit nouisque se obligat uotis, si cetera prospera euenissent*, 'when Hannibal had reviewed the contingents sent in by all the nations, he went to Gades and discharged his vows to Hercules, binding himself with fresh ones, in case he should be successful in the remainder of his undertaking').

The anecdote of Hannibal's visit to the temple of Hercules may either date back to Silenus or be instead a Livian



innovation serving the purpose of uniting the characters of Alexander, Hannibal and Caesar in an historical *continuum* of 'Parallel Lives'. Indeed, Cipriani has pointed out intriguing parallels between Hannibal's episodes and similar anecdotes on Alexander and Caesar.<sup>109</sup> Arrian and Plutarch recount that Alexander, who wished to sacrifice to Tyrian Hercules (Arr. *An.* 2.16.7), had a dream in which he saw Hercules reaching out his hand to him from the wall of Tyre, and this meant that he would capture the city, though with much toil:

ἀλλὰ καὶ τι θεῖον ἀνέπειθεν αὐτόν, ὅτι ἐνύπνιον αὐτῆς ἐκείνης τῆς νυκτὸς ἐδόκει αὐτὸς μὲν τῷ τείχει προσάγειν τῶν Τυρίων τὸν δὲ Ἡρακλέα δεξιούσθαι τε αὐτὸν καὶ ἀνάγειν ἐς τὴν πόλιν. Καὶ τοῦτο ἐξηγεῖτο Ἀρίστανδρος ὡς ξὺν πόνῳ ἀλωσομένην τὴν Τύρον, ὅτι καὶ τὰ τοῦ Ἡρακλέους ἔργα ξὺν πόνῳ ἐγένετο ...

(Arr. *An.* 2.18.1)

In some degree an omen influenced him, for in a dream that very night he found himself approaching the wall of Tyre, and there was Hercules, stretching out his right hand, and conducting him into the city. Aristander interpreted this dream to mean that Tyre would be taken, but with an effort, for Hercules' achievements involved effort ...

... ὃναρ εἶδε τὸν Ἡρακλέα δεξιούμενον αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ τείχους καὶ καλοῦντα.

(Plut. *Alex.* 24.5)

... he had a dream in which he saw Hercules stretching out his hand to him from the wall and calling him.

The dream of Alexander displays some similarities with Hannibal's dream, especially in the detail of the *iuuenis diuina specie* (possibly Livy's innovation, since in Cicero's version Hannibal is summoned directly by Jupiter) who invites him to follow (*proinde sequeretur*). Livy may have wished to suggest a parallel between the two generals, all the more striking if we take into account that Alexander's dream concerned the destruction of Hannibal's and Dido's mother city, also explicitly compared to the destruction of Carthage towards the end of *Aeneid* 4 (*Aen.* 4.670).

<sup>109</sup> Cipriani (1984), 104–23.

The second parallel noted by Cipriani is with Caesar's dream at Gades as recounted by Suetonius. Here the *continuum* between Caesar and Alexander is explicitly stated, since it is the statue of Alexander that drags Caesar to the temple of Hercules at Gades:

ubi cum mandatu praetoris iure dicundo conuentus circumiret Gadisque uenisset, animaduersa apud Herculis templum Magni Alexandri imagine ingemuit et quasi pertaesus ignauiam suam, quod nihil dum a se memorabile actum esset in aetate, qua iam Alexander orbem terrarum subegisset, missionem continuo efflagitauit ad captandas quam primum maiorum rerum occasiones in urbe.

(*Iul.* 7.1).

When he was there, while making the circuit of the assize towns, to hold court under commission from the praetor, he came to Gades, and noticing a statue of Alexander the Great in the temple of Hercules, he heaved a sigh, and as if out of patience with his own incapacity in having as yet done nothing noteworthy at a time of life when Alexander had already brought the world to his feet, he straightaway asked for his discharge, to grasp the first opportunity for greater enterprises at Rome.

The following night, Caesar dreams of violating his mother, a dream which is interpreted by soothsayers, on the basis of the equation mother = earth, as the foreboding that he will rule/ 'rape' the whole world:

Etiam confusum eum somnio proximae noctis – nam uisus erat per quietem stuprum matri intulisse – coniectores ad amplissimam spem incitauerunt arbitrium terrarum orbis portendi interpretantes, quando mater, quam subiectam sibi uidisset, non alia esset quam terra, quae omnium parens haberetur.

(*Iul.* 7.2)

When he was still dismayed by a dream he had had the following night – for he thought he had brought violence to his mother in his sleep – the soothsayers inspired him with high hopes by interpreting the dream as the augury that he would rule the whole world, since the mother whom he had seen subjected to him was none other than the earth, which is regarded as the mother of all.

Caesar's dream pushes the commander close to the figure of the eastern monarch, and the double interpretation of the dream points to worldwide dominion as an 'incestuous' union with the world. We are indeed closer than one might think to

the almost Egyptian Caesar who visits the tomb of Alexander in Lucan's Book 10 and looks up in admiration and imitation at the 'disastrous plague to earth and thunderbolt' (Luc. 10.34 *terrarum fatale malum fulmenque*) who 'rushed with human slaughter and drove his sword in the breast of every nation' (10.31–2 *humana cum strage ruit gladiumque per omnes | exegit gentes*). The dream brings about the Roman concern that Hannibal might wish to be a second Alexander, as well as a Caesar *avant la lettre*, and rape the Italian soil in the devastation that he is about to bring. This devastation is foretold, in the dream, by the image of the snake, another difference from Cicero's version, where Hannibal saw instead a 'beast of enormous size, enveloped with snakes' (*Diu.* 1.49 *uisam beluam uas-tam et immanem circumplicatam serpentibus*). The choice of the snake is noteworthy, since this is a beast mythically related to the historical figures of Alexander, the elder Scipio and Caesar Augustus – all characters whose mothers were said to have had intercourse with a serpent.<sup>110</sup> From the height of the Augustan age, Livy makes his Hannibal a *figura* of both past and future, Roman and foreign *duces*, already suggesting the chain of association Alexander – Hannibal – Caesar – Augustus – Nero that will become an explicit feature of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, and looking forward to those 'momentary monsters'.<sup>111</sup>

Both these episodes, I argue, have more in common with the epic of Virgil than with Polybian historiography, and both need to be introduced as storytellings of *fama*-rumour in order to be acceptable to the readers. Since both anecdotes are openly fictitious stories about the almost mythical character of Hannibal, it is worth noticing how this '*fama*-rumour episode' of Hannibal seems to constitute a contrasting parallel with the '*fama*-glory episode' of Scipio in the finale of the decade (30.45). At first, the *fama*-glory bestowed on Scipio at the end of the work seems fundamentally different from the *fama*-rumour which constructs the character of Hannibal at the beginning of the same work. But this difference is only

<sup>110</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2.6, Liv. 26.19.7, Suet. *Aug.* 94.4.

<sup>111</sup> W. R. Johnson (1987).

illusory, since rumour and glory are exactly two aspects of the same *fama*, which is ‘both process and product’.<sup>112</sup> In this sense, Livy’s use of *fama* is strikingly similar to Virgil’s, whose location of *Fama* in Libya made it ‘proleptic of the great military fame that will come out of this land in wars of which this *Fama* is also ultimately the cause’.<sup>113</sup> As in the case of the *Aeneid*, where Hardie notices how the *fama*-rumour which destroys the Punic queen is the chronological precedent of the *fama*-glory that will reach Italy from Libya after Scipio’s military enterprise, Livy’s *fama* is also split into the *fama*-rumour which shapes his ‘historical’ version of Hannibal from the beginning of the war and the *fama*-glory which, partly thanks to the previous *fama*-rumour, will be bestowed on Scipio and the Romans at the end of the same war. That is, both versions of *fama*, in both works, equally fall under the Jupiter-driven control of the Roman empire with opposing consequences for Dido/Hannibal and for Aeneas/Scipio: the former being a tool, a plaything in the hands of epic and historiographical rumour-incensed propaganda in order to enhance the latter’s glorification.

This is one way of looking at the matter, but I shall now dedicate the last section of this chapter to an investigation of what exactly is framed by *Fama* at the beginning of Livy’s third decade – and more importantly why it needs to be framed so. As I shall argue, Livy’s decision to frame the outbreak of the Hannibalic War with *fama*-episodes is both deliberate and telling, since the interpretation of the Saguntum episode is, historically speaking, one of the most delicate matters of the whole Hannibalic War. The decision to surround the much debated causes of the war with an aura of storytelling and myth may indicate an author who shows deep awareness of the inherently partial nature of the practice of historiography. As in the case of Virgil’s *septima aetas*, the problems which surround the causes of the war are concerned with diachronicity: like

<sup>112</sup> Hardie (2012) 246.

<sup>113</sup> Hardie (2012) 263. Cf. Clément-Tarantino (2006) 86 n. 9 on Virgil’s *Fama* becoming *Fama belli* in its reception.

Virgil, Livy replies to such problems with an explicit subversion of times.

Diachronicity is the basis of history: historical discourse takes root in the diachronic succession of events, ordered one after the other in a temporal continuum; it provides empty events with a specific meaning in relation to the other elements in the chain. Yet, since a particular event or set of events is attributed significance only in relation to what precedes and follows it, the significance itself may appear highly subjective and ultimately dependent on the authorial mind of the one who ‘makes the cut’ – the historian who selects some events instead of others and has the last word on their order. History, as it is, ‘a provider of significance to mere chronicity’,<sup>114</sup> is the fiction which enables us, by ‘confer[ring] organization and form on the temporal structure’,<sup>115</sup> to call two versions of the very same sound by a different name, and even to persuade us that the sounds we hear are different, a ‘tick’ and a ‘tock’. As historiography fuels itself with diachronicity and uses it to provide its own version and interpretation of significant events, every change in the chronicity must necessarily imply a different version of the story. When chronology is put under discussion, as in the case of Hannibal’s attack on Saguntum, the impartiality and truthful nature of the historical discourse is under dangerous threat: dissolution of the temporal dimension undermines any historical certainty and rather connects the events with the realm of myth, which is based not on *consecutio temporum*, but on cycles of endless repetition.<sup>116</sup>

If we turn to look at the causes of the Hannibalic War, Polybius indicates as the ‘first cause’ (Pol. 3.9.6 *πρῶτον ... αἴτιον*) the personal ‘wrath’ (*θυμός*) of Hamilcar Barca, caused by the seizure of Sardinia in 238 BCE and the war indemnity which was exacted by Rome (Pol. 3.10). Thereby he singles out the resentment of the defeated side and the terms imposed by the victors as the real ‘cause’ of a second war, a very plausible

<sup>114</sup> Arendt (1961) 56.

<sup>115</sup> Kermode (1966) 45.

<sup>116</sup> See Eliade (1954) 35.

interpretation, which can also be compared with the causes of the outbreak of the Second World War.<sup>117</sup> The ‘pretext’ (πρόφασις) of the war, however, was a different matter,<sup>118</sup> and had to be found in Hannibal’s sack of Saguntum, which was at the time a Roman ally. Polybius claims that, by destroying the city, the Carthaginians violated two treaties, the 241 treaty of Lutatius, by which the allies of both parties should be secure of attack by the other, and the Ebro treaty, which was stipulated in 226 or early 225<sup>119</sup> and only seemed to state, according to Polybius himself, that ‘the Carthaginians should not cross the Ebro in arms’, while, as he has clarified earlier in the previous book, ‘no mention was made of the rest of Spain’ (Pol. 2.13.7 συνθήκας, ἐν αἷς τὴν μὲν ἄλλην Ἰβηρίαν παρεσιώπων):

διόπερ εἰ μὲν τις τὴν Ζακάνθης ἀπώλειαν αἰτίαν τίθῃσι τοῦ πολέμου, συγχωρητέον ἀδίκως ἐξενηνοχέειν τὸν πόλεμον Καρχηδονίους κατὰ τε τὰς ἐπὶ τοῦ Λυτατίου συνθήκας, καθ’ ἃς ἔδει τοῖς ἐκατέρων συμμάχοις τὴν ὑφ’ ἐκατέρων ὑπάρχειν ἀσφάλειαν, κατὰ τε τὰς ἐπ’ Ἀσδρούβου, καθ’ ἃς οὐκ ἔδει διαβαίνειν τὸν Ἰβηρα ποταμὸν ἐπὶ πολέμῳ Καρχηδονίους·

(Pol. 3.30.3)

Therefore, if we take the destruction of Saguntum to be the cause of the war we must allow that the Carthaginians were in the wrong in beginning the war, both in view of the treaty of Lutatius, in which it was stipulated that the allies of each should be secure from attack by the other, and in view of the convention made with Hasdrubal, by which the Carthaginians undertook not to cross the Ebro in arms.

This statement, if taken in itself, appears flawed and partisan, unworthy of the truthful historian that Polybius professes to be.<sup>120</sup> In fact, as regards the Lutatius treaty, it is not clear whether it also covered allies made later than the treaty,<sup>121</sup> and in any case the Roman seizure of Sardinia three years after the stipulation of the pact could hardly not be considered a violation,

<sup>117</sup> See Rich (1996) 3.

<sup>118</sup> On the distinction between ‘causes’ (αἰτίαι), ‘pretexts’ (προφάσεις) and ‘beginnings’ (ἀρχαί) of wars see Pol. 3.6–7.

<sup>119</sup> On the basis that the Gallic invasion of Italy, which took place in 225, was imminent: Pol. 2.13.7.

<sup>120</sup> On the difficulties of this passage, see Mazzarino (1947) 109–23.

<sup>121</sup> See Walbank (1957), 357; Liv. 21.19.5 with Walsh (1973), 155.

as Polybius accepts immediately after this passage, when he admits that, in view of the 'robbery of Sardinia and the tribute exacted', the Carthaginians had 'good reason' for entering the war (Pol. 3.30.4 εἰ δὲ τὴν Σαρδόνης ἀφαίρεσιν καὶ τὰ σὺν ταύτῃ χρήματα, πάντως ὁμολογητέον εὐλόγως πεπολεμηκέναι τὸν κατ' Ἀννίβαν πόλεμον τοὺς Καρχηδονίους), and as he had already anticipated by claiming that the Carthaginians were forced to evacuate the island 'contrary to all justice' (Pol. 3.28.2 παρὰ πάντα τὰ δίκαια).<sup>122</sup> On the other hand, there is nothing in the logical succession of the sentence to suggest that the destruction of Saguntum violated a treaty which only forbade the Carthaginians to cross the Ebro in arms, unless we believe, with Mazzarino and Walbank among many,<sup>123</sup> that Polybius is here reporting the 'outrageous assertion',<sup>124</sup> also provided by Appian (*Hann.* 2, *Hisp.* 7, *Pun.* 6), that Saguntum lay north of the Ebro, a clear subversion of geography explicitly serving a political purpose, since the town lay on the coast around 150 km *south* of the river.<sup>125</sup> It is possible that Polybius is here referring to two separate events, the sack of Saguntum *and* the subsequent crossing of the Ebro, but if so he is expressing himself in a rather obscure and clumsy way.<sup>126</sup> Alternatively, it is also possible that Hannibal's attack on Saguntum violated the Ebro treaty in a different way, if the treaty also stipulated a non-aggression pact between the two parties and their respective allies – something which Polybius does not state anywhere. However, the same problem encountered with the Lutatius treaty would remain, since it is not certain whether the treaty also covered allies made subsequently. In fact, we don't know when, and if, Saguntum became a Roman ally: it may have postdated the Ebro treaty. Polybius himself is very vague about it, stating only that it happened 'many years before the time of

<sup>122</sup> See Serrati (2006) 133; for a pro-Roman interpretation of the seizure of Sardinia, see Carey (1996).

<sup>123</sup> See Mazzarino (1947) 115; Walbank (1957) 358; Scardigli (1991) 279; Rich (1996) 10–11.

<sup>124</sup> Serrati (2006) 133.

<sup>125</sup> Polybius locates Saguntum south of the Ebro at 3.14.9, 97.6, 98.5; other passages are unclear: 3.15.5, 30.3, 61.8; 4.28.1, with Rich (1996) 10 n. 37.

<sup>126</sup> See Rich (1996) 11 n. 39; F. Russo (2011) 89.

Hannibal' (Pol. 3.30.1 πλείοσιν ἔτεσιν ἤδη πρότερον τῶν κατ' Ἀννιβαν καιρῶν), therefore certainly before 221.<sup>127</sup> But if the date falls between 226 and 221, and if the Ebro treaty made no mention of future allies, then the Carthaginians would not have been guilty of breaking the accord: rather, it may have been the Romans who violated it first by taking Saguntum under their protection.<sup>128</sup>

Livy offers his own, clearly pro-Roman interpretation of the Ebro treaty at the outset of Book 21 (21.2.7). The passage stands in clear parallel to the end of the [previous chapter](#), which featured Hannibal's '*fama*-episode' followed by Hamilcar's reasons for anticipating a second war, namely the loss of Sicily and Sardinia (21.1.5 *angebant ingentis spiritus uirum Sicilia Sardiniaque amissae*, 'the loss of Sicily and Sardinia tortured the man in his proud spirit'):

Cum hoc Hasdrubale, quia mirae artis in sollicitandis gentibus imperioque suo iungendis fuerat, foedus renouauerat populus Romanus ut finis utriusque imperii esset amnis Hiberus Saguntinisque mediis inter imperia duorum populorum libertas seruaretur.

(Liv. 21.2.7)

With this Hasdrubal, because of the marvellous skill which he had shown in tempting the native tribes to join his empire, the Roman people had renewed their covenant, with the stipulation that neither side should extend its dominion beyond the Ebro, while the Saguntines, situated between the empires of the two peoples, should be preserved in independence.

This version of the Ebro treaty is highly 'anachronistic' and 'tendentious'.<sup>129</sup> Pace Polybius, who only saw the Ebro treaty

<sup>127</sup> See Serrati (2006) 131: 'If he is so sure about the whole affair, why is he so vague about the date on which the city came under Roman protection?' Cf. Rich (1996) 2: 'Polybius' statements are tantalizingly obscure about both the nature of this connection and the date at which it was formed' and 24–5. For a pre-Ebro treaty view, see Mazzarino (1947) 138–9.

<sup>128</sup> See Mazzarino (1947) 102–3, Serrati (2006) 133, Beck (2011) 230–1. However, there is no certainty that the ban on crossing the Ebro applied to both sides: see Rich (1996) 20–1. See also the most recent interpretation by F. Russo (2011) according to whom Saguntum would be covered by the Lutatius treaty on the (fictitious) basis that it was a colony of Rutulians from Ardea (Liv. 21.7.2), therefore a colony of Roman allies.

<sup>129</sup> Walsh (1973) 123.



as a means to ensure a limit to the Carthaginians' expansionism in Spain, the Ebro here becomes the frontier between two empires, much like the so-called *Arae Neptuniae* seem to have become the boundary-marker between the Carthaginian and the Roman spheres of influence in the First Punic War, a matter that I have discussed elsewhere but that we shall briefly touch upon in [Chapter 4](#).<sup>130</sup> The Ebro, like the *Arae*, becomes the threshold that neither party should cross – in which case, the Romans would definitely be in the wrong if their alliance with Saguntum postdated the treaty. However, Livy adds, in what Walsh calls a 'chauvinistic forgery reproduced from annalistic sources',<sup>131</sup> probably dating back to Coelius,<sup>132</sup> that Saguntum lay in the middle between the two territories, and had special immunity guaranteed by the treaty. Later on in the book, after Saguntum has been sacked, Livy will also represent one Carthaginian explicitly endorsing this version of the pacts (21.18.9 *at enim eo foedere quod cum Hasdrubale ictum est Saguntini excipiuntur*, 'But in that treaty which was made with Hasdrubal the Saguntines are expressly cared for'). The same version is reported by Appian, just after the error in locating Saguntum north of the Ebro (*Hisp.* 7, cf. 11), Florus (*Epit.* 1.22.4), Zonaras (8.21.4) and Silius (1.294–5).

Therefore, the two opening chapters of Book 21 confront the reader straight away with an explanation for the Second Punic War as the inevitable consequence of the will of Hamilcar Barca, which Hannibal then inherited from Hamilcar, as well as a tendentious version of the Ebro treaty, which foreshadows Hannibal's guilt in the outbreak of the war. Both of these notions are a result of *fama*, a crooked (mis)understanding of the historical events – the first explicitly and the second by implication. A little later in the book, with the start of the narration of Hannibal's actions in Spain, these two stories join together to provide a rationale for the war that suits a pro-Roman author:

<sup>130</sup> See Giusti (2014b) and pp. 221–2. On the clear connection between the outbreak of the First and Second Punic Wars, see Beck (2011) 232.

<sup>131</sup> Walsh (1973) 123.

<sup>132</sup> See Rich (1996) 5.

Ceterum ex quo die dux est declaratus, uelut Italia ei prouincia decreta bel-lumque Romanum mandatum esset, nihil prolatandum ratus ne se quoque, ut patrem Hamilcarem, deinde Hasdrubalem, cunctantem casus aliquis opprim-eret, Saguntinis inferre bellum statuit.

(Liv. 21.5.1–2)

For the rest, from the day on which he was proclaimed commander-in-chief, as though Italy had been assigned to him for his field of operations and he had been instructed to make war on Rome, he felt that no postponement was per-missible, lest he too, like his father Hamilcar, and afterwards Hasdrubal, should be overtaken, while delaying, by some accident, and resolved upon attacking the Saguntines.

According to Livy, Hannibal's actions in Spain all gravi-tate towards war against Rome, an aim which he had vowed to fulfil when he was nine years old, and which was his first thought once he was put in command. Livy presents all his actions in Spain, the subjugation of the Olcades, Vaccaeï and Cardetani, as preliminary to his attack on Saguntum, there-fore to war against Rome. According to Walsh, this section 'reveals the tendentious nature of Livy's sources and exposes his geographical vagueness',<sup>133</sup> since this is not quite the ver-sion of events that we find in Polybius. Indeed, according to the Greek historian, Saguntum was apparently the only city on the western side of the Ebro to 'dare to withstand lightly' the Carthaginians (Pol. 3.14.9 οὐδεὶς ἔτι τῶν ἐντὸς Ἰβηρος ποταμοῦ ῥαδίως πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἀντοφθαλμεῖν ἐτόλμα πλὴν Ζακανθαίων, 'none of the peoples on that side of the Ebro ventured lightly to face the Carthaginians'), and Hannibal followed his father's advice in 'trying as far as he could to keep his hands off this city, wishing to give the Romans no avowed pretext for the war' (3.14.10 ταύτης δὲ τῆς πόλεως ἐπειρᾶτο κατὰ δύναμιν ἀπέχεσθαι, βουλόμενος μηδεμίαν ἀφορμὴν ὁμολογουμένην δοῦναι τοῦ πολέμου Ῥωμαίοις). Like Livy, Polybius admits elsewhere (2.36.4) that Hannibal's plan was, from the beginning, to make war on Rome, yet the Carthaginian commander initially han-dled the Saguntum affair with more caution than we are given to believe by Livy. Shortly afterwards, however, the state of

<sup>133</sup> Walsh (1973) 129.

affairs changes, as Hannibal gets carried away by his wrath, after the Saguntines sent repeated messages to Rome (3.15.1) and, 'relying on their alliance with Rome', started to 'wrong some of the people subjected to Carthage' (3.15.8 Ζακανθαῖοι πιστεύοντες τῇ Ῥωμαίων συμμαχίᾳ τινὰς τῶν ὑφ' αὐτοὺς ταπτομένων ἀδικοῦσι). In Polybius' view, Hannibal should have continued to follow Hamilcar's advice and should have demanded the restitution of both Sardinia and the tribute, since the Carthaginians were in the right in regard to this cause of outrage; yet it was 'entirely under the influence of unreasoning and violent anger' (3.15.9 καθόλου δ' ἦν πλήρης ἀλογίας καὶ θυμοῦ βιαίου)<sup>134</sup> that he decided to attack Saguntum and, by so doing, he 'gave the idea that he was entering the war not only unsupported by reason but without justice on his side' (3.15.11 οὐ μόνον ἀλόγως, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον ἀδίκως κατάρχειν ἐδόκει τοῦ πολέμου).<sup>135</sup>

Here, after having already been confronted with various tendentious interpretations of the facts, we come to Livy's faulty chronology of the Saguntum affair, a matter inextricably entangled with his propagandistic and chauvinistic version of the events. At the beginning of 21.6, we are told that the Saguntines sent an embassy to Rome before Hannibal's attack, and that the consuls at the time were Publius Cornelius Scipio and Tiberius Sempronius Longus (21.6.3), the consuls for 218, who referred the matter to the Senate, where it was decided to send two legates, Publius Valerius Flaccus and Quintus Baebius Tamphilus, 'to Hannibal first, and then, if he would not retreat from war, to Carthage, to demand the surrender of the general himself in satisfaction of the broken treaty' (21.6.8 *legatique eo maturius missi, P. Valerius Flaccus et Q. Baebius Tamphilus, Saguntum ad Hannibalem atque inde Carthaginem, si non absisteretur bello, ad ducem ipsum in poenam foederis rupti descendum*). This account of the events, probably derived from Valerius Antias, is, in Walsh's severe phrase, 'a tissue of lies':<sup>136</sup>

<sup>134</sup> On Hannibal's 'irrational behaviour' as the reason of his failure, see Eckstein (1989).

<sup>135</sup> See Hoyos (1998) 181.

<sup>136</sup> Walsh (1982) 1062.

not only did the Roman legates, in Polybius' version, meet Hannibal at New Carthage in 220, before the siege began (Pol. 3.15), but all historians concur with Polybius' chronology dating the start of Hannibal's attack on Saguntum shortly after Lucius Aemilius Paullus, cos. 219, was sent to Illyria, an event which happened 'just before summer in the first year of the 140th Olympiad (220/219)' (Pol. 3.16.7 ὑπὸ τὴν ὥραιαν ... κατὰ τὸ πρῶτον ἔτος τῆς ἑκατοστῆς καὶ τετρακακοστῆς ὀλυμπιάδος). Hence it is commonly accepted that the siege started, curiously enough, at the beginning of the *seventh summer* since the Ebro treaty,<sup>137</sup> towards the middle of May 219 BCE, and that Saguntum was captured after eight months (Pol. 3.17.9), probably between December 219 and January 218.<sup>138</sup> It is also commonly recognised that the Romans took no action to help a city to which they were apparently tied by such a strong bond as to embark upon a second war against Carthage for Saguntum's sake.<sup>139</sup> This inaction on the part of the Romans disappears if we accept Livy's version of the chronology, according to which Rome would have had no time to help its besieged ally:<sup>140</sup> as remained proverbial for time-wasting in political language,<sup>141</sup> Saguntum was attacked when the Romans were still consulting (21.7.1 *dum ea Romani parant consultantque, iam Saguntum summa vi oppugnabatur*, 'while the Romans were thus planning and deliberating, Saguntum was already being attacked with the greatest vigour'), and the legates who had left Rome before Hannibal's attack arrived at Saguntum in the middle of the siege (Liv. 21.9.3 *interim ab Roma legatos uenisse nuntiatum est*, 'in the meantime it was announced that ambassadors had come from Rome'). Moreover, this fictive embassy, to which Hannibal denies a hearing because of the critical juncture of the siege (21.9.3 *nec Hannibali in tanto discrimine rerum operae esse legationes audire*, 'Hannibal

<sup>137</sup> If we accept the most plausible date of 226 rather than 225, on which see above.

<sup>138</sup> For the chronology of the episode, see Sumner (1966).

<sup>139</sup> See Beck (2011) 231.

<sup>140</sup> Walsh (1982) 1062; Hoyos (1998) 202.

<sup>141</sup> In the simplified form *Dum Romae consulitur, Saguntum expugnatur*.

had no time for listening to embassies at such a critical juncture'), also allows the historian to put in Hanno's mouth the pro-Roman view that Hannibal, in not admitting the legates to the camp, contravened the *ius gentium*, 'thrusting it aside' (21.10.6 *ius gentium sustulit*).

When the Saguntum episode comes to an end, Livy pauses the narrative to reflect on his faulty chronology, kindly admitting that it is only with difficulty that we can believe that the siege of Saguntum started in 218 and, unless we are ready to credit that all these events happened in a remarkably short time, it is much more likely that the attack on Saguntum started in 219, and that Publius Cornelius and Tiberius Sempronius were consuls at the end of the siege, rather than at its beginning:

Octavo mense quam coeptum oppugnari Saguntum quidam scripsere; inde Carthaginem nouam in hiberna Hannibalem concessisse; quinto deinde mense quam ab Carthagine profectus sit in Italiam peruenisse. Quae si ita sunt, fieri non potuit ut P. Cornelius Ti. Sempronius consules fuerint ad quos et principio oppugnationis legati Saguntini missi sint et qui in suo magistratu cum Hannibale, alter ad Ticinum amnem, ambo aliquanto post ad Trebiam, pugnaverint. Aut omnia breuiora aliquanto fuere, aut Saguntum principio anni quo P. Cornelius Ti. Sempronius consules fuerunt non coeptum oppugnari est sed captum.

(Liv. 21.15.3–5)

Some have recorded that Saguntum was taken in the eighth month from the beginning of the siege; that Hannibal then retired to New Carthage, into winter quarters; and then, after leaving New Carthage, arrived in the fifth month in Italy. If this is so, it cannot have been the case that Publius Cornelius and Tiberius Sempronius were the consuls to whom the Saguntine envoys were dispatched in the beginning of the siege, and who, in their own year of office, fought with Hannibal, the one at the river Ticinus, and both – a little later – at the Trebia. Either all these things took up somewhat less time, or Saguntum was not first besieged but finally captured in the outset of the year which had Cornelius and Sempronius as consuls.

This passage has been recently analysed in depth by Levene in the context of a general discussion of Livy's practices of narrative organisation, which often involve artificial and impossible chronologies 'so as to create a single chronologically

impossible but narratively desirable sequence'.<sup>142</sup> Levene reports the 'surprisingly common interpretation'<sup>143</sup> that Livy may have dated the start of siege to 218 in order to shorten the length of the siege and exculpate the Romans from their failure to provide help to the Saguntines, but dismisses it on the basis that Livy himself draws attention to the Romans' dilatoriness at more than one passage.<sup>144</sup> In his view, Livy directs our attention to the chronological inconsistency at a significant juncture, just before he starts to juxtapose features from different chronologies, since at 21.17.1 he states that the provinces of Spain and Africa had already been allocated 'earlier' to the consuls of 218, even though at 21.6.6 the same allocation was only suggested.<sup>145</sup>

Levene's interpretation is especially significant for the understanding of Livy's methods of composition, but it does not take a stance on the question of whether the historian is reporting a pro-Roman or pro-Carthaginian version of the events. The portrait of Livy that comes out of the picture is that of an honest historian, who pauses to reflect on the difficulties inherent in the handling of different sources. And yet the narrative that we have been following so far has been anything but objective, with clear echoes of tragic historiography, recognised epic features<sup>146</sup> and, as we have seen, clearly tendentious versions of the events. It is as if, after the tragic climax has been reached at 21.14, with the mass suicide of the Saguntines at the end of the siege, Livy has to take back the reins of his historical analysis and thus dedicate 21.15 to a discussion of the chronology in the various sources, a matter which is here presented as if it was completely unrelated to the interpretation of the events. And yet we know, as Livy

<sup>142</sup> Levene (2010) 61; see the discussion at 53–63; cf. 370.

<sup>143</sup> Levene (2010) 60 n. 154.

<sup>144</sup> 21.7.1, 11.3, 16.2, 19.9–10.

<sup>145</sup> Levene (2010) 60 n. 156: 'it looks as if Livy is smoothing over the absence of provincial allocations at the start of the year, implying that they had been made earlier but without specifying when that "earlier" might have been'.

<sup>146</sup> See in particular Cipriani (1984) and (1987).

certainly did, that the length of the siege was a vital element for assessing the guilt of the Romans in failing to provide help to their allies.

### 3.5 Conclusion

The two case studies discussed in this chapter have shown Virgil and Livy dealing with what appear to be two completely different topics in two very different literary genres. However, such a difference is partially assuaged by noticing that these two contemporary authors – who have already been noticed elsewhere to be in some kind of dialogue with each other – are both recounting the ‘cause’ of the Punic Wars, albeit respectively from an epic and historiographical perspective. The two authors, despite their different ways, share the same understanding of chronology as a factor which is essential for assessing a particular version of events – be those events mythical or historical – and they both draw attention to the chronological inconsistencies present in their works and to their significance for a correct understanding of the story. To make a bolder statement on the same line of reasoning, it seems that Virgil and Livy, by drawing attention to these inconsistencies, also direct the attention to the importance of their authorial power in the story, emphasising the relevance of their role in providing a particular version of events which will ultimately be transmitted to posterity and thus become Tradition. In this picture, the role of *Fama* as both creator and product of a renewed Tradition is essential to both stories: in Virgil, it is *Fama* who spread the rumour, in explicit conflict with what will be Iris’ version, that Aeneas has spent a winter with the Carthaginian queen; in Livy, the two *Fama*-episodes frame the whole preamble to the Hannibalic War, including an explicit recognition of the historian’s artificial handling of chronology for the sake of both narrativity and historical analysis.

In addition to this, Livy confronts us with another smaller chronological inconsistency towards the end of the preamble, when he creates the impression that chapters 19–20 and 21–2

happen simultaneously rather than in chronological sequence. This impression would be confirmed by the fact that Hannibal seems to have already crossed the Ebro at the end of 21.20, and is instead presented as crossing it at the beginning of 21.23. However, the crossing of the Ebro at 21.20 is a mere, possibly fake, storytelling of *fama*-rumour, fuelled and inflated by the Romans' expectations (21.20.9 *ciuitatem omnem expectatione belli erectam inuenerunt satis constante fama iam Hiberum Poenos tramisisse*, 'they found the citizens all on tiptoe with expectation of the war, for the rumour persisted that the Carthaginians had already crossed the Ebro'). And yet if we read Appian, and those passages of Polybius where he seems to locate Saguntum north of the Ebro, we learn that in attacking the city Hannibal had already crossed the river, and thereby broken the treaty. Such a version of the events clearly distorts geography at the expense of the Carthaginians, whereas if *fama* here merely anticipates the crossing, it is chronology to be distorted, apparently at the expense of no one. And yet either way we are taken always further from an account of the event 'as it actually occurred', as if History had been turned into playdough, left to *Fama* and its authors to mould and to play with.

In both the Dido and Aeneas story and the Saguntum episode we find conflicting versions, with their conflicting chronologies, carried around and inflated by *Fama* up to the point where objective reconstruction of the real historical event becomes impossible. Both Virgil and Livy draw attention to the existence of different versions and different chronologies, and thus to the difficulty of having to take a stance and make a decision when reporting such murky events. In both cases, our task is to decide what drove their decision, whether it is aesthetics or ideology, or a mixture of both. In the case of Saguntum, we have seen that Livy's decision to anticipate the fall of the city could betray either literary or political reasons: by shortening the length of the siege, Livy may have wished either to speed up the pace of the narrative, or to exculpate the Romans from the accusation of having failed to help the Saguntines. Similarly, when he pauses to reflect on the inconsistencies of



the chronology, he could have either aimed at directing the attention on a problem of narrative organisation, or at emphasising the fictional nature of his historical account. Of course, the interpretation of Livy's choices will in its turn depend to a great degree on the personal ideological or aesthetic preferences of Livy's reader. This is a further, possibly infinite turn on the linguistic turn: like history, literary criticism is never criticism, but always 'criticism-for'.<sup>147</sup>

<sup>147</sup> Lévi-Strauss (1966) 257: 'History is therefore never history, but history-for.'

CHAPTER 4

VIRGIL'S PUNIC/CIVIL WARS  
AS UNSPEAKABLE

Silence reveals speech – unless it is speech that reveals the silence.

Pierre Macherey<sup>1</sup>

4.1 Covering up the Wars

In the [previous chapter](#), I have argued for Virgil's awareness of the fictional account that he is putting forward in his Carthage episode. This fictionality allows him to turn Dido and her city into a veritable maze of ethnic identities that would qualify as eastern or 'other' and thus ideally help the opposite characterisation of the Roman self, but at the same time he is also free to turn this image into a mirror for the Trojans' search for a (Roman) identity, and a reminder that that newly found identity was again lost with the disappearance of *metus hostilis* in the aftermath of the Punic Wars, and more recently in the last breath of the Republic, as intimated by the echoes of Antony, an Egyptianised Roman, at the court of his oriental queen Cleopatra. Who loses in this game of identifications is none other than Queen Dido, whose character as mythical arch-enemy of Rome eventually depends upon Virgil's interest in portraying Rome's 'other' in oppositional or analogical terms in relation to Rome's 'self' – as it has also been argued for other great enemies of Roman history, such as Sallust's Jugurtha as a double for Marius,<sup>2</sup> or Livy's Hannibal as a double for Scipio Africanus the Elder.<sup>3</sup> If Rome is where Virgil's spotlight lies, then it is no surprise that Dido's Punic features should be

<sup>1</sup> Macherey (1978) 86.

<sup>2</sup> Kraus and Woodman (1997) 27.

<sup>3</sup> Rossi (2004b). Cf. Elliott (2009) on the similarities between Livy's Hannibal and Quintus Fabius in terms of their military tactics.

almost completely erased in his account, as much as we may look for them. Only scattered stains of Punic memory survive from the carnage anticipated behind Dido's death: among these is the double mention of the Punic word for 'huts' (*maga-lia*, or *mapalia*, at *A.* 1.421 and 4.259), two hints at Carthage's Punic name Qart hadast (*A.* 1.298 and 366)<sup>4</sup> and the memory of the Barcids behind the name of Sychaeus' nurse Barce and the Barcaeii.<sup>5</sup> These do little justice to the transformation of Tanit and Ashtart into Juno and Diana, in a text that erases Carthage's solar deities, Melqart and Baal-Hammon, to present the city as the domain of nocturnal female goddesses such as Hecate and Diana, to which Dido 'the wanderer' is explicitly compared.<sup>6</sup> Probable as they are, these faint echoes of specifically Phoenician or Carthaginian traits do not counter the fact that, to put it with Ralph Hexter, 'the *Aeneid* can and must be read as a site of Roman self-blinding'.<sup>7</sup> In other words, Hexter's 'Sidonian Dido' is little more than a desperately evoked erasure in a poem that has made Carthage Roman before Rome even existed, as signified by the long-suspected allusions to the Augustan colony *Concordia Iulia Carthago* in the anachronistic description of the city at Aeneas' arrival.<sup>8</sup>

As I have argued in [Chapter 1](#), this erasure of Carthage's memory from the sources, and of Punic traits from Carthaginian literary characters, can already be detected in a text as early as Plautus' *Poenulus*, which makes the *Aeneid*'s un-Punic treatment of Dido not as surprising as we may think. And yet Virgil, in attempting to set up a Latin correspondent

<sup>4</sup> See [Chapter 2 n. 44](#).

<sup>5</sup> See *VE s.v.* 'Barce' and 'Barce and Barcaeii'.

<sup>6</sup> See Gowers (2016). On Dido's possible connections with Ashtart (and Anna's with Ashtart's sister Anat) see Hexter (1992) 347–50, and 251–2 on syncretisms with the Greco-Roman pantheon.

<sup>7</sup> Hexter (1992) 351.

<sup>8</sup> See Kraggerud (1963) and E. L. Harrison (1984). Carthage was probably a construction site at the time of the *Aeneid*. The colony's project was first proposed by Gaius Gracchus in 122 BCE but aborted for fear of Scipio Aemilianus' curse upon the soil in 146; it was then taken up by Caesar but partly demolished by the triumvir Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. Octavian already repaired some of the damage in 35–34 BCE and officially sent new settlers in 29 BCE, but it is probably that the colony's reconstruction was only completed in 14–13 BCE. See Cassola in *EV s.v.* 'Cartagine' and Rakob (2000).

for Homer's Phaeacia, takes advantage of Carthage's obliteration from memory, which allows him a unique literary freedom in portraying its mythical queen. This is all the more true when we consider that he is also allowed to send Aeneas to an entirely fictitious site, a site which did not exist in either Aeneas' nor Virgil's time: Carthage would only be founded 370 years after Aeneas' wanderings, and it had moreover ceased to be a reality for more than one century at the time of Virgil's writing of the poem. The site functions – and will continue to function, at least in its western reception – as a Foucauldian 'heterotopia' or 'other space',<sup>9</sup> a space which exists in reality but is only defined in terms of what is not, not yet, no longer. This makes Carthage a uniquely ripe space for fiction, speculation, experimentation: it gives Virgil the freedom to turn Dido into a truly multi-dimensional character, to fashion her simultaneously as Cleopatra, Medea, Ajax and Lucretia, and at the same time to pause and reflect, in the excursus on *Fama*, on this very fictional and poetic enterprise.

But if the absence of Dido's Punic traits is somewhat unsurprising, there is another and more curious absence that pervades the whole poem and has often been commented upon: this is the relative lack of reference to the Punic Wars in a poem which devotes two of its books (and the whole frame of the first four) to their mythical *aition*. Indeed, the *Aeneid* as a whole is strikingly laconic on the subject.<sup>10</sup> The Punic Wars are not mentioned where they would perhaps be expected (Jupiter's prophecy in Book 1, the shield of Aeneas in Book 8, Juno's reconciliation in Book 12) and are only allusively recalled in the Carthage episode, both at the beginning (1.19–20) and in Dido's final curse (4.622–9). The parade of Book 6 does feature some of their Roman heroes (Cato the Elder (6.841), the two Scipios (842–3), Gaius Atilius Regulus (844), Quintus Fabius Maximus (845–6) and Marcus Claudius Marcellus (855–9)), but the concern is with their personalities

<sup>9</sup> See Foucault (1984), translated by J. Miskowiec in Foucault-Miskowiec (1986). I have treated this aspect of Carthage in Giusti (2017).

<sup>10</sup> Wigodsky (1972) 29, Syed (2005) 146, Goldschmidt (2013) 103 speaks of a 'notorious gap' on Aeneas' shield.

rather than the wars. Only at *A.* 10.11–14, in a recognisably Ennian context, does Jupiter mention the Second Punic War as a future event comparable to the wars in Latium, thus providing what is seemingly a brief and cursory parallel between the conflicts of *Aeneid* 9–12 and the Hannibalic War. Other than this, the poem remains silent, prompting the suggestion that, according to Wigodsky, the Punic Wars ‘are alluded to in *Aeneid* I and IV on account of the Dido story, rather than the Dido story’s being introduced on their account’.<sup>11</sup>

Virgil’s apparent lack of concern for the Punic Wars has been challenged by those scholars who appreciate the notion that absences often catch our attention better than presences. Only a few years after Wigodsky’s contribution, Horsfall brought Dido back into ‘the light of history’,<sup>12</sup> bringing to the surface those very stereotypical Punic traits that we have noticed Virgil to have kept hidden, and also recognised the Hannibal in Turnus which was only latent in Jupiter’s comparison.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, more than one critic has emphasised the importance of reading Aeneas’ arrival at Carthage by taking into consideration the historical conflict that would follow,<sup>14</sup> and Nora Goldschmidt has successfully attempted a reading of ‘Virgil’s *Punica*’ following the influence of early Roman epic.<sup>15</sup>

The rehabilitation of the Punic Wars for the interpretation of the *Aeneid* has followed the path of the recognition of allusions to (analogies with, evocations of) single episodes of the wars, some of which I will touch upon in this chapter. However, I suggest that the impact of the Punic Wars in the first five books of the *Aeneid* goes way beyond scattered random echoes, since the whole episode appears to be structured according to the narrative of the wars, with evocations of the First Punic War in Book 1, of the Hannibalic War in Book 4, and of the destruction of Carthage at the end of the same

<sup>11</sup> Wigodsky (1972) 29–30.

<sup>12</sup> Horsfall (1973–4).

<sup>13</sup> Horsfall (1974).

<sup>14</sup> Kraggerud (1963), A. Barchiesi (1999), Egan (1998), Casali (1999), Syed (2005) 146–8, Schiesaro (2008), Shi-Morgan (2015).

<sup>15</sup> Goldschmidt (2013) 109–15; cf. Feeney (1984).

book. This narrative is further sealed, I argue, by a triumphal re-enactment of episodes of the Punic Wars encoded in the Sicilian Games of Book 5.

From a terminological as well as theoretical perspective, I therefore suspect that such a close remapping of the history of Carthage and Rome behind the myth of Aeneas and Dido should deserve a different status from the other historical allusions, or evocations, present at specific places in the poem, to the point that we may be allowed to speak of a clear and recognisable historical ‘allegory’ of the conflict at work in the whole of Virgil’s Carthage episode.<sup>16</sup> If this is the case, then we may also be allowed to read the whole episode by attempting an inversion of Virgil’s priorities as they have been so far recognised by Virgilian scholarship. As we have seen in the quotation by Wigodsky, it is ‘Dido’ who comes first, and it is through the mythical love story that we hear history’s reverberations. On the contrary, in this chapter, I shall read the history of the Punic Wars first, *before* it retires and transfigures into the Dido myth. Such a reading is thus neither allusive nor analogical, but explicitly allegorical: that is, we are not simply dealing with scattered echoes of the wars, but with a whole structural and thematic equivalence, or superimposition, between a crucial chapter of Roman Republican history and a specific version of the myth of Rome’s origins that, by offering itself as the mythological *aition* for that very episode, also aspires to become its official mythological tradition. It is in order to highlight this specific role of the Dido story that Virgil turns the whole episode into a *mise en scène* not only of the outbreak of the conflict, but also of the wars themselves.

Having said that, we must surely be wary of the dangers inherent in calling the Carthage episode an historical ‘allegory’ of the Punic Wars, since the term almost inevitably appears to imply some sort of privileged and unilateral interpretation of the text that cannot fit the fascinating polysemy of a poem

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Horsfall (1974) 80–1 and his need to specify that his reading of Turnus as a ‘*Hannibal ad portas*’ does not belong to the field of ‘allegory’, but rather to what Camps (1969) 95 defined ‘the evocation of later events through analogy, sometimes pointed by a strikingly allusive phrase or detail’.

such as the *Aeneid*, with its 'complexity and rich configuration of its multiple allegories'.<sup>17</sup> The Punic Wars are not the only historical 'allegory' at work here, and perhaps they are not even the most recognisable: few readers would find Dido to bear more similarities to Hannibal than to Cleopatra, for instance. Moreover, such an ideological or historicist reading overlooks many of the aesthetic, philosophical, poetic reasons which lie behind the author's foregrounding of the love story to the obvious detriment of history: even though it might be history which opens the door to the myth, it is nonetheless on the Dido story that Virgil's spotlight remains undeniably pointed.<sup>18</sup>

The matter is furthermore complicated by the fact that the real 'unmentionable' of Virgil's *Aeneid* is arguably not the Punic Wars, but rather the civil conflict. At the beginning of Book 2, in a passage which may seem to betray a blending of Virgil's and Aeneas' voices, Aeneas famously defines the Trojan War an 'unspeakable pain' (*A. 2.3 infandum, regina, iubes renouare dolorem*),<sup>19</sup> a wound which Dido urges him to 'reopen' (*renouare*), forcing him to undergo that painful internal process of recovery of traumatic history that we have seen Pollio dealing with in Horace's *Odes* 2.1.<sup>20</sup> As Austin notes, 'Virgil's personal outlook appears in his application [of *infandus*] to war and slaughter' at other points of the poem.<sup>21</sup> However, in Book 2 in particular, the idea that Virgil is signalling his own inability to treat the horrors of war behind Aeneas' apparent reluctance to narrate the sack of Troy becomes especially plausible once

<sup>17</sup> W. R. Johnson (1976) 2: 'The habit of reading the poem as a political and cultural allegory ... persists to the present day, obscuring the quality of the poetry and limiting, disastrously, the range and depths of the poem.' On the possibility of using the term 'allegory' without downplaying the polysemy of texts, see [Chapter 1](#), pp. 34–5.

<sup>18</sup> That is, I do not endorse Monti's view that a lack of ideological reading has led to 'the obfuscation and misunderstanding of what the poet is saying', Monti (1981) 1. On the use and abuse of 'ideology critique' in Latin poetry, see Martindale (2005).

<sup>19</sup> An echo of *A. 1.597 infandos ... dolores*.

<sup>20</sup> See [Introduction](#), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> Austin (1964) 28. Cf. *A. 10.673, 12.804*. Horsfall (2008) 48 adds that *infandum* appears to be 'a distinctively tragic term, absent from Catullus, Lucretius, Horace and the elegists (*semel in Ibis*)'. See also Seider (2013) 102–4.

we champion the fact that Virgil is also actually narrating the historical horrors of Civil War behind the mythical sack of Troy, especially in view of the famous ‘absent presence’ of the death of Pompey behind the death of Priam, the scene which is repeatedly recognised as the climax of this unspeakable horror.<sup>22</sup> In Llewelyn Morgan’s reading of the allegory of Pompey behind Priam, Aeneas suddenly becomes a double for Asinius Pollio, precisely the eyewitnessing tragic historian to whom Horace addresses his *recusatio* and withdrawal from treating the Civil War trauma.

As Camps already indicated,<sup>23</sup> it is eventually the wars in Latium that can be recognised as the final allegory of the *infandum bellum* that is Civil War (7.583, cf. 12.804 and 12.572 *belli ... nefandi*), and scholarship since then has been prolific on the matter.<sup>24</sup> This may indicate that both the Carthaginian episode and the sack of Troy can be interpreted as preludes to the more conspicuous allegory of the Civil Wars that will frame the second half of the *Aeneid*. For our purposes, however, we must note that there is a complex double process of repression of historical facts in the Dido episode: on the one hand, Virgil chooses to hide at least one of the many unmentionable Civil Wars stories, that of Antony and Cleopatra (if not also Caesar and Cleopatra),<sup>25</sup> behind the cover of the mythical love story of Aeneas and Dido; on the other hand, however, the mythical love story also works as a mask for the less recent but equally traumatic history of the conflict against Carthage. It is there, in the interaction between these two layers of repression and disguise, that the horrors of both wars intertwine in the most devastating manner: when the poetic surface of the mythical love story is finally washed out to let the future memory of the

<sup>22</sup> See already Servius *ad A.* 2.557: *Pompei tangit historiam*. See Moles (1983), Bowie (1990), Morgan (2000). Cf. also Narducci (1973).

<sup>23</sup> Camps (1969) 96–7.

<sup>24</sup> See for example Morgan (1998) and especially Mac Góráin (2013). In recent times there has also been a renewed interest in emphasising the importance of the Social War, and its interaction with the civil conflict: see especially A. Barchiesi (2008) and Marincola (2010), and the forthcoming publication of Barchiesi’s Sather Lectures, *The War for Italia: Conflict and Collective Memory in Vergil’s Aeneid*.

<sup>25</sup> See n. 36.



historical conflicts crash into the fiction of myth, Punic and Civil Wars appear finally joined in a cause-and-effect relationship, becoming one link in a chain of endless repetition.

## 4.2 Framing the Wars

Virgil's Carthage episode (Books 1–4) can be seen as an episode in its own right in the *Aeneid*, in view of the long recognised tripartite structure that the poem clearly exhibits alongside its more famous bipartite one.<sup>26</sup> This suggestion is further confirmed by the fact that, at the beginning of Books 1 and 5 respectively, the storms that find the hero on the same route 'with return' (from Sicily to Carthage and from Carthage back to Sicily) characterise the passages in question in terms of narratological and metaliterary 'transitions', and appear to frame the hero's stay in Carthage as an episode which differs in both time and space from the linearity of his journey and story. The idea that atmospherical phenomena are often the vehicle by which literary characters are separated from reality and projected into fantasy worlds and wonderlands is common in modern fantasy fiction,<sup>27</sup> but is also a literary device as ancient as the *Odyssey*: at *Odyssey* 9.67–73, we find a nine-day storm which, from the Cicones' land ('a perfectly real Thracian people'<sup>28</sup>), 'throws the hero off course to Wonderland',<sup>29</sup> and Odysseus' arrival at Scheria, a reign which lies on the border between the everyday reality of Ithaca and the fantastic lands of the stories,<sup>30</sup> is similarly marked by a storm (5.291–332) which is famously the Homeric model for the tempest in *Aeneid* 1.

The Phaeacian model conveys intriguing suggestions about the reality and unreality of the land towards whose shores the

<sup>26</sup> Mackail (1930) 298, Camps (1954), Duckworth (1957), Pöschl (1962) 172.

<sup>27</sup> It suffices to think about *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, or Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*.

<sup>28</sup> Vidal-Naquet (1981) 83.

<sup>29</sup> 'verschlägt den Helden ins Fabelland', P. Von der Mühl (1940) Art. 'Odyssee'. *RE Suppl.* 7, col. 720, my emphasis.

<sup>30</sup> See Segal (1962), Vidal-Naquet (1981) 91.

hero is tossed: just like Scheria, Dido's Carthage too is a kingdom which bears similarities with both the almost historical Troy of *Aeneid* 2 and the wonders of *Aeneid* 3. However, what strengthens the impression that Aeneas is being transported to a different space-time dimension is what I have argued in [Chapter 3](#) to be a conscious and deliberate subversion of time in this 'mythical history' on Virgil's part. Given that the meeting of Aeneas and Dido, whether or not drawn on a Naevian precedent,<sup>31</sup> is a clear chronological impossibility, Aeneas is implicated in a journey forward in time that in a sense anticipates the constant forward-looking patterns of the poem, and the city whose construction he witnesses in Libya, together with further allusions to even more distant futures of destruction and reconstruction,<sup>32</sup> is a kind of ghost world, which does not yet exist at the time of his landing.

In addition to this, the previously discussed 'riddle' of the *septima aestas*<sup>33</sup> can be read as a deliberate and masterful inconsistency in keeping with the anachronistic character of the whole episode: just as the hero does not proceed in space from setting out from Sicily in *Aeneid* 1 to landing in Sicily in *Aeneid* 5, time too does not seem to proceed from the seventh summer of his wanderings, specified by Dido at 1.755–6, to the seventh summer since the destruction of Troy, indicated by Iris at 5.626. The four books of the epic that passed between these two moments now seem not to have contained actual episodes of the hero's journey, but to be rather made up of flashbacks (Books 2–3) and flashforwards (Books 1–4), which were nonetheless so dense as to appear as lasting a whole year, since Aeneas at the start of Book 5 tells us that one year has passed since Anchises' death (5.46–8), and we have also been informed that he has spent a winter with the Carthaginian queen (4.193). The expansion of time is another common characteristic of the journeys in wonderlands, and one which is borrowed from our experience of dreams: after all she has been through, Alice

<sup>31</sup> See [n. 61](#).

<sup>32</sup> See [Chapter 4.5](#).

<sup>33</sup> [Chapter 3](#), pp. 113–18.

wakes up at tea time, after taking a mere nap.<sup>34</sup> The famous sleep of Odysseus returning from Scheria (*Od.* 13.73–80) also seems to emphasise the dreamlike qualities of the Phaeacians, even though there is no comparable distortion of times in the Homeric model. This is not to come to the conclusion that the riddle of the *septima aestas* should be easily solved by interpreting Aeneas' stay in Carthage as a completely dreamy or dreamlike experience. Yet, once one appreciates that the puzzle must be taken as a deliberate and productive inconsistency rather than an inaccuracy of the poet, a lapse on his part,<sup>35</sup> it certainly appears to emphasise the obvious anachronisms and the blending of times which is such an essential part of the whole Carthage episode.

The length of Aeneas' jump forward in time in *Aeneid* 1 is not only the one, well known in antiquity, of those 370 years which passed between the fall of one city and the foundation of the other, but it is also made of glimpses from a much more recent future. As already anticipated, Aeneas' experience in Carthage can be read as a clearly circumscribed 'prophecy' of various stages of the three Punic Wars, while it also famously looks at least as far as the times of Cleopatra, perhaps alluding to her relationship with Caesar,<sup>36</sup> and most certainly to that with Antony. Such a dreamlike and prophetic journey to the future is framed, in a sort of ring composition, between two passages which, when read together, indirectly comment on what the journey has taught to both Aeneas and the future generations that this 'synechdocic hero' represents.<sup>37</sup>

As recently emphasised by Matthew Leigh and Thomas Biggs, the first ship journey of the *Aeneid* competes not only with Homeric epic, but also with the early Roman rewriting of Homer by Livius Andronicus, a work which would have

<sup>34</sup> A more recent example of this is offered in Neil Gaiman's *Coraline*.

<sup>35</sup> Like the inconsistencies discussed by O'Hara (2007), it should be regarded as a product of the poet's artistry rather than a sign of the poem's incompleteness.

<sup>36</sup> If we are meant to recognise an allusion to Caesarion, the ill-fated son of Caesar and Cleopatra, in Dido's wish for a *paruulus Aeneas* at *A.* 4.327–30. See Eidinow (2003) with further bibliography.

<sup>37</sup> For Aeneas as a 'synechdocic hero' see Hardie (1993) 4.

been read together with Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*, especially with regard to those episodes located in and around Sicily.<sup>38</sup> The fact that the storm of *Aeneid* 1 is likely to have a Naevian precedent<sup>39</sup> further confirms the impression that Virgil is combining, at the very outset of his enterprise, both the Greek and Latin Homer with Roman historical epic, in a kind of homage to the time that saw both the dawn of Rome's outstanding naval power<sup>40</sup> and the birth of Latin literature: in Leigh's words, that 'Moment' which was both 'Maritime' and 'Epic'.

Leigh's suggestions reverberate strongly in the first appearance of the proto-Roman Trojans in the *Aeneid*. When we first catch sight of them, their sailing off from Sicily is described in terms that anachronistically bring to mind the conquering and military 'maritime moment' of third-century Romans:

uix e conspectu Siculae telluris in altum  
uela dabant laeti et spumas salis aere ruebant,  
cum Iuno aeternum seruans sub pectore uulnus ...

(*A.* 1.34–6)

Hardly out of sight of the Sicilian land were they happily spreading their sails toward the open sea, churning the foaming brine with their bronze prows, when Juno, nursing an eternal wound deep in her heart ...

The attitude shown by Aeneas and his comrades in setting off from the island which was famously the theatre of the First Punic War is notably one of optimism (35 *laeti*) in their churning of the sea foam with their anachronistic ('anti-antiquarian') prows, whose bronze (35 *aere*) indicates the presence of *rostra*, accentuating the aggressive connotations of *ruebant*<sup>41</sup> in providing these ancient ships with an historical naval weapon.<sup>42</sup> The same anachronism is further taken up,

<sup>38</sup> Leigh (2010), Biggs (2014).

<sup>39</sup> DServiceus *ad A.* 1.198 and Macrobian *Sat.* 6.2.31; see p. 219.

<sup>40</sup> A Roman navy was for the first time constructed in 261–260 BCE: see Pol. 1.20.9 with Lazenby (1996) 62–3.

<sup>41</sup> A verb which will be shortly taken up more than once by the furious winds: 83 *ruunt*, 85 *ruunt*, cf. 129 *caeli ... ruina*.

<sup>42</sup> See Sandbach (1965–6) 26, Austin (1971) 40.

and noted by Servius Danielis,<sup>43</sup> in a reference to these ships as *biremes* (I.182), making them more similar to the warships of the Punic Wars rather than the ancient ships of the *Odyssey*.<sup>44</sup> These deliberate anachronisms reinforce the resemblance between these proto-Romans and their descendants who had been immortalised in the epic of Naevius: the first time that they appear pointing seawards (34 *in altum*), it is a metaphoric footstep towards the greatness of their appointed goals (*A.* 1.7 *altae ... Romae*).

Yet the *uix* of line 34 is suddenly taken up by the *cum* of Juno's anger (36), a temporal connection which drags the Trojans back into their own mythological context and also hints at what will prove to be a cause-and-effect relationship. Readers are thus invited to acknowledge that these Trojans appear similar to the post-First Punic War Romans only to the eyes of the goddess who, like readers, has access to the future, for 'she had heard that one day they would overthrow the Tyrian citadel' (*A.* 1.20 *audierat Tyrias olim quae uerteret arces*): and she is the one who, struggling to escape from that prophecy in a strikingly tragic, Laius-like move, will instead

<sup>43</sup> DServius ad *A.* 1.182: *quidam tamen 'biremes' ad suum tempus uolunt dixisse Vergilium, negantes Troicis temporibus biremes fuisse. Varro enim ait post aliquot annos inuentas biremes.* 'Some claim that Virgil was referring to his times by using the word *biremes*, since they say that there were no *biremes* at the time of the Trojan War. Indeed Varro claims that *biremes* were invented several years later.'

<sup>44</sup> Polybius affirms that the Romans mainly employed quinqueremes in the First Punic War (1.63.4–9), after recounting the story of the ship of Hannibal the Rhodian, which, having been captured by the Romans, served as the model for constructing 'a fleet of two hundred quinqueremes' (1.59.8 διακοσίων πλοίων πεντηρικῶν). Polybius' numbers, however, might be highly exaggerated in order to astonish the reader with the presentation of a fleet of titanic dimensions. The relatively small dimensions of the rams recently discovered near Levanzo (see <http://rpmnautical.org/ramsgallery.html>) and almost certainly attributable to the battle of the Aegates Islands, seem to some to indicate that the Roman ships were more likely to have been triremes, or even smaller vessels like lemboi, a suggestion which would confirm the idea that the Romans changed their ships after they had lost at Drepanum, as Polybius states, because of the slowness of their ships in comparison to the Carthaginian (Pol. 1.51). Scholars, however, are divided on the matter, and have recently debated the issue in a one-day colloquium in Oxford, 'Naval Warfare in the Third Century BC: Rams, Warships, and Officials', Faculty of Classics, University of Oxford, 8 April 2013 (S. Tusa and W. Murray favouring the small dimensions of these ships; F. Hocker, J. Royal and B. Rankov urging to caution). On the relationship between ram and ship dimensions, see Murray (2012) 47–68.

counterproductively put in motion the very process that will bring the prophecy's fulfilment.<sup>45</sup> Juno, persuading Aeolus to mix up day and night 'in a dizzying swirl which destroys all centrality of focus',<sup>46</sup> compromises any linearity of time, and pulls the Trojans away both from their goal and from that future that had been allusively envisaged. The optimistic enthusiasm which drove the proto-Roman ships is then substituted with Aeneas' nostalgic backward look at the Trojan past (I.94–101).

The idea that what the Trojans are distanced from is not only Italy, but also the historical future that Italy stands for, is substantiated by an interpretation of the scene of their arrival at the harbour of Carthage (I.157–79). This is a place whose literary models all 'hover between civilization, barbarism and magic'<sup>47</sup> and which, through the self-quotation of *A.* I.161 from *G.* 4.420,<sup>48</sup> the harbour of Proteus, carries Aeneas and the readers into a 'realm between myth and nature',<sup>49</sup> a world of supernatural transformation between the divine, the human and the bestial.<sup>50</sup>

The landing of the Trojans at the shores of Libya stands in striking opposition to their setting off from Sicily:

defessi Aeneadae quae proxima litora cursu  
contendunt petere, et Libyae uertuntur ad oras.  
est in secessu longo locus ...

(*A.* I.159–61)

<sup>45</sup> A move which, to remain in the realm of fantasy fiction, Gildenhard (2012) 39 n. 20 compares to that of the wizard Voldemort in the Harry Potter books.

<sup>46</sup> Segal (1981) 70.

<sup>47</sup> Quotation from Schiesaro's unpublished typescript: these models are the harbours of Ithaca (*Od.* 13.96–112), the Cyclopes (*Od.* 9.136–41), the Laestrygonians (*Od.* 10.87–94), Circe (*Od.* 10.133–202), the arrival at the Phaeacians (*Od.* 5.438–44) and the mouth of the Phasis (*Arg.* 2.1260–85).

<sup>48</sup> *A.* I.161 *frangitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos*, cf. *G.* 4.420 *cogitur inque sinus scindit sese unda reductos*.

<sup>49</sup> Segal (1966) 315 on Proteus.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Hardie (1999) 92: 'The Homeric anthropology emphasizes the inescapably fixed limits of human nature through a systematic set of contrast with the not-human, on the one side the divine and on the other the bestial. And it is true that the chief examples in the *Odyssey* of a transformative power that transgresses these limits, the figures of Proteus and Circe, are encountered by the human heroes in places on the margins in the human world.'

## Virgil's Punic/Civil Wars as Unspeakable

Aeneas and his comrades, exhausted, strive to reach whatever land is closest, and so they end up diverted to the shores of Libya. There is a place, in a deep retreat ...

Having lost the overconfidence which they seemed to display before the storm, they are now exhausted and discouraged (159 *defessi*, with a slight passive connotation inherent in the deponent form, perhaps suggesting the idea that they have been *defatigati* by the storm), worn by the forces of nature. They have left to the gods their well-deserved hierarchical prominence: they are no longer portrayed in control of the sea, but are rather struggling (160 *contendunt*) to head towards the land, and passively carried by the waves (160 *uertuntur*).

Their entrance into the *secessus*, 'a place to which one retires from the world',<sup>51</sup> together with the following self-quotation from the epyllion of *Georgics* 4,<sup>52</sup> seems to postpone the Roman future previously envisaged by carrying them into the realm of a past, distant myth. As Schiesaro calls it, this is a 'regressive trajectory' which subsequently appears, through a close evocation of Lucretius' discussion on the evolution of mankind, to turn them back 'to a quasi-primitive stage of evolution'.<sup>53</sup> And yet, even though the clock of time seems to have gone into reverse during the storm, this is only in comparison to the future glimpse of the Romans' 'Maritime Moment' that we received at the beginning of the narrative. The Trojans seem to recover time quite easily, not only through the 'capture' of fire, but more specifically in the following hunt (184–94), where Aeneas metaphorically 'slays' (190 *sternit*) three deer-*ductores* (189) who are 'keeping their heads high' in haughty fashion (189 *capita alta ferentis*), and their whole following 'army' (186 *agmen*, cf. 190–1 *uulgu et omnem ... turbam*, 'the people, and the whole throng [of deer]'). Aeneas' first action on the shores of Libya anticipates the dark forebodings of Dido's deer simile in Book 4 (4.69–73), and is parallel to Ascanius' killing of Silvia's stag in the first book of the second half of the

<sup>51</sup> OLD s.v. *secessus* 2b.

<sup>52</sup> See n. 48.

<sup>53</sup> Quotation from Schiesaro's unpublished typescript; cf. Schiesaro (2005a).

poem (7.475–502), a move which will be the cause of another almost ‘Hannibalic’ War. Furthermore, if we are to believe Servius when he claims (*ad A.* 1.161) that some readers would have connected this fictional harbour to the real harbour of Carthago Nova in Spain, we may already be, unwittingly, in the territory of the Hannibalic War.<sup>54</sup> While time seems to have turned backwards since the allegorical end of the First Punic War at the calming of the storm, the military conflict against the Carthaginians has already been set back in motion.

In striking ring composition with the ‘transitional passage’ of *Aeneid* 1, the beginning of Book 5 seems to provide an *a posteriori* comment on the victorious outcome of the military conflict which has allegorically taken place in Books 1 and 4. Here, in the ship journey from Carthage to Sicily, Aeneas is portrayed as having completely regained control of the sea:

interea medium Aeneas iam classe tenebat  
certus iter fluctusque atros Aquilone secabat  
moenia respiciens, quae iam infelicis Elissae  
conlucent flammis.

(*A.* 5.1–4)

Meanwhile Aeneas, determined in his resolve, was already keeping his fleet on course in the middle of the sea, and cutting through the waves, darkened by the north wind, he looked back at those walls, already resplendent with the flames of wretched Elissa.

*Interea* (5.1) marks the temporal contingency as well as the geographical distance between the hero’s destiny and that of Dido, as he looks back (3 *respiciens*) at the walls of the city in flames as if they were part of a now distant past. His control over the path is now secure (1–2 *tenebat ... certus iter*) and he is able to ‘cut’ (2 *secabat*) those same black waves (2 *fluctus ... atros*) that had caused so much damage

<sup>54</sup> See Shi-Morgan (2015) for the revival of the suggestion and its implication for the historical echoes of the Punic Wars in the episode. The parallel is also important for the relationship between Virgil and Livy, although the similarities between *A.* 1.159–69 and Livy 26.42.7–8 may derive from a common source such as Ennius’ *Annales*: Shi-Morgan (2015) 112–13.



## Virgil's Punic/Civil Wars as Unspeakable

to the fleet in his last voyage. However, the dangers of that very same trait of sea are still lurking in the background, as another tempest looms above, and the dark waves creep in the shadows of the abyss:

olli caeruleus supra caput astitit imber  
noctem hiememque ferens et inhorruit unda tenebris.

(A. 5.10–11)

Above his head there stood a cloud like lead, bringing night and storm, as the wave shivered in the darkness.

But the proto-Romans, whose stay in Carthage has symbolised those maritime wars which would assure them control over the whole *oikoumene* (Pol. 3.1.4), have now acquired a certain dexterity in navigation, and are able to avoid the storm quite easily, relying on the flow of the Zephyri:

petunt portus et uela secundi  
intendunt Zephyri; fertur cita gurgite classis,  
et tandem laeti notae aduertuntur harenae.

(A. 5.32–4)

... they set course for the harbour and a favourable wind stretches their sails; soon the fleet is brought over the sea, and they are delighted to land, at last, to a beach that they already know.

Only now, having escaped not only the perils of the First Punic War, but also those of the Second, up to the actual destruction of Carthage in the third, can they really be *laeti* (cf. the parallel between 1.35 and 5.34), and in total control of the Mediterranean. And they are ready to perform those triumphal *ludi* which will enact again, but in a joyful and festive fashion, those dreadful episodes of the wars against Carthage.

### 4.3 The First Punic War – or *Bellum Punicum*

Readers of the *Aeneid* may rightly expect the poem to retain some memories of the First Punic War, since it was the subject of one of the epic poems which Virgil's was bound to replace: Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*. However, not only is our

knowledge of this poem, in terms of both content and structure, extremely limited,<sup>55</sup> but the loss of Livy's second decade, the second half of which provided an account of the war, also contributes to our shadowy understanding of both the events and their poetic re-evocations.<sup>56</sup>

Nevertheless, the influence of Naevius' poem on the *Aeneid* can be taken as a safe starting point. Both epics displayed a similar mixture of *Odyssey* and *Iliad*; both were made out of a *contaminatio*<sup>57</sup> of history and myth,<sup>58</sup> *praetexta* and *cothurnata*, and similarly included flashforwards and flashbacks in time.<sup>59</sup> Most importantly, both Servius Danielis and Macrobius have singled out Virgilian passages, such as the tempest of Book 1, in which the *Bellum Punicum* could be recognised as an explicit source.<sup>60</sup>

However, the interactions of history and myth in Naevius' poem, and thus their influence on the *Aeneid*, are very far from being properly understood. It is generally believed that Naevius inserted, somewhere within his account of the First Punic War, the so-called 'Archaeology', a mythical section that narrated Aeneas' flight from Troy and his arrival in Italy, which is likely to have included the meeting with the Carthaginian queen and which appears to have started in Book 1 and continued into Book 3.<sup>61</sup> But given that we are dealing with mere fragments it seems impossible to reconstruct not only the length of the

<sup>55</sup> For treatments of Naevius, see Mariotti (1955), M. Barchiesi (1962), Wigodsky (1972) 22–39, Goldschmidt (2013) 105–15.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Lazenby's comments about the scarcity of modern historical contributions to the first war in comparison to the second (1996) ix; the relationship between Livy and Naevius is, as M. Barchiesi remarks, one of 'desperate difficulty' (1962) 52 n. 222.

<sup>57</sup> See Mariotti (1955) 17 for the suggestion that Naevius' blend of the Homeric poems paralleled the theatrical practice of *contaminatio*, perhaps introduced in Latin drama by Naevius himself.

<sup>58</sup> See M. Barchiesi (1962) 226.

<sup>59</sup> For a similar treatment of prophecies, see Wigodsky (1972) 21–4.

<sup>60</sup> DServius *ad A.* 1.170, 1.198, 1.273, 2.797, 3.10, 4.9, (7.123), 9.712; Macr. *Sat.* 6.2.30–1; 6.5.9. The reasons why Servius never refers to Naevius are mysterious. The common source of DServius and Macrobius was probably Donatus (see Rowell (1957a)), but it may also be connected with Probus, probably one of the *auctores* of *Servius auctus*, whose interest in Naevius is well attested: see M. Barchiesi (1962) 84 n. 392, 103 n. 505.

<sup>61</sup> See Strzelecki (1964). Scholars are still divided on whether the meeting between Aeneas and Dido was included in the poem: the Cambridge and Oxford

'Archaeology', but most importantly the borders it shared with the historical parts. The most likely connection between the two faces of Naevius' poem would be the meeting of Aeneas and Dido as a mythical *aition* for the war,<sup>62</sup> but the possibility that such a juncture appeared instead abrupt and (so) extremely sophisticated – such as, for instance, in Catullus 64 – cannot be ruled out, since it would be in line with the Alexandrian taste that Naevius' poem was likely to share.<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, the very existence of the 'Archaeology' is not beyond doubt: it is also possible that Naevius' poem, Hellenistic in both length and style, displayed 'fragments' of the 'Archaeology' scattered within the historical narrative in the form of repeated *aitia*, rather than a long and continuous mythical episode. This last possibility would create an interesting 'contrasting parallel' with the use of history and myth in Virgil's *Aeneid*: whereas Naevius had written a poem on the Punic War with aetiological glimpses into the Aeneas myth, Virgil's poem is instead centred on Aeneas' myth with forward-looking aetiological glimpses into Roman history.

The fragment which best exemplifies both the traditional scholarly attitude to Naevius and the alternative option just mentioned is the so-called Prochyta fragment (fr. 13 Str.),

commentators (Conway (1935) xiii–xiv and Austin (1971) xi–xii) strongly emphasised the role of Virgilian innovation in the episode, as did DeGraff (1950) in response to Vahlen's *Dido ... tota Naeviana est* (1854) CL and, more recently, Wigodsky (1972) 22–34. However, since both Dido and Anna were mentioned in Naevius (DServ. *ad A.* 4.9 = fr. 21 Str.) and the episode was certainly known before Virgil by Varro (DServ. *ad A.* 4.682) and Ateius Philologus (*Testimonia*, 9, *GRF*, 137), there is little doubt that it was included in the *Bellum Punicum*, whether or not one takes Dido as the subject of *percontat* in fr. 23 Str.: see Mariotti (1955) 37–9, M. Barchiesi (1962) 551 fr. 16 and 447–82, Strzelecki (1964) xxvi–xxviii, Horsfall (1995) 134 n. 64. It is sensible to imagine that this mythical *aition* for the outbreak of the wars 'most probably first assumed shape in the time of the Punic Wars' (Sellar (1889) 59) rather 'than in the age of Virgil when the power of Carthage was only a distant memory' (Luck (1983) 271). The *aition* would also provide the most logical explanation for the insertion of the so-called 'Archaeology' in the body of Naevius' otherwise historical poem (Rowell (1957b)).

<sup>62</sup> See Rowell (1957b).

<sup>63</sup> See Mariotti (1955) 11–22. The length of the *Bellum Punicum*, a *carmen continuum* divided into seven books by Octavius Lampadio, a second-century BCE grammarian (Suet. *de gramm.* 2), is estimated at around 4,000–5,000 lines, thus relatively brief for an epic (*Iliad* and *Odyssey* are ca. 15,000 and 12,000 lines respectively). On the Alexandrianism of Naevius and Ennius see Chapter 1 n. 144.

whose relationship with Virgil's Palinurus has been examined at length by Mariotti.<sup>64</sup> According to Servius Danielis, Naevius, in the first book of his *Bellum Punicum*, connected the name of the island of Prochyta with that of a kinswoman of Aeneas (*ad A.* 9.712 = fr. 13 Str. *Prochyta: hanc Naevius in primo belli Punici de cognata Aeneae nomen accepisse dicit*). Most scholars, believing that the 'Archaeology' started in Book 1 of Naevius' poem, have taken the reference as proof that Aeneas had already reached Italy in the first book of the *Bellum Punicum*: he would have arrived at Prochyta and named the island after this kinswoman of his. Marmorale,<sup>65</sup> however, held that the context was instead Aeneas' flight from Troy, which would have featured the character of Prochyta. In naming the characters involved in the episode, Naevius, of Capuan origin, may have lingered briefly on the mythical woman who gave the name to an island which was close to his birthplace. In terms of Naevius' handling of aetiology, both these interpretations clearly align the *Bellum Punicum* with the characteristic features of Virgil's *Aeneid*.<sup>66</sup> But using the *Aeneid* to reconstruct this poem is both dangerous and invidious, since it clearly betrays the indemonstrable and preconceived belief that the two poems shared the same handling of aetiology, and also dealt in the same way with the relationship between history and myth. In the case of the Prochyta fragment, the two reconstructions have been proposed on the basis of a preconceived faith in the existence of the 'Archaeology', even though there is no indication in Servius Danielis that the fragment was part of such a section as the 'Archaeology'. Another hypothesis which has been put forward is that the Capuan Naevius, at the beginning of his poem, had a geographical digression on the places close to his birthplace. To this suggestion I would add that the bay of Naples was not only a place personally relevant to Naevius, but perhaps strategic for the Romans' 'Maritime Moment',

<sup>64</sup> Mariotti (1955) 40–7.

<sup>65</sup> See Marmorale (1950) 237.

<sup>66</sup> This is a 'Vergiliocentric' side effect coming from dealing with what Jackie Elliott (2013) 9, 75–135 calls (for Ennius) 'Vergiliocentric' sources.

since it had become a centre of ship-building during the First Punic War. Although there is uncertainty about the place where the first Roman navy was built,<sup>67</sup> we know from Polybius (1.20.13–14) that Appius Claudius borrowed ships from Naples among other places in order to cross the straits of Messina in 264 BCE.

The Prochyta fragment is thus a very graphic example of how the reconstruction of lost poems moves from preconceived beliefs: if one wants to stress continuity with Virgil's practice, there is more than one possible way of doing it. Similarly, if one aims at proving exactly the opposite, that Naevius' primary concern was the First Punic War, and he embellished the narration here and there with extracts of Aeneas' story, that is also an open possibility.

So little is known about the structure of Naevius' poem that any attempt at reconstruction is extremely vulnerable to criticism, but this has not and should not hinder scholars from putting forward suggestions. I have already drawn attention to Virgil's decision to start the poem in that tract of sea which was common to both Livius' Ulixes and Naevius' first Roman navy: it is likely that a similar evocation of Aeneas' route to Italy might have prompted Naevius to insert a narration of Aeneas' journeys inside the historical account of the war fought around those shores in a time contemporary to him. It is significant that three out of eight references to Naevius in Servius Danielis are to be found in the first 300 lines of the *Aeneid*, perhaps indicating that Aeneas' landing on the shores of Libya should be taken as the most Naevian passage of the whole *Aeneid*.

Among these references, Servius Danielis informs us that in the *Bellum Punicum* Aeneas left Troy on a ship built by Mercury (*ad A.* 1.170 = fr. 7 Str. *nouam ... rem Naevius Bello Punico dicit – unam nauem habuisse Aeneam, quam Mercurius fecerit*), that Aeneas' speech to his comrades on the shores of Libya is taken from the *Bellum Punicum* (*ad* 1.198 = fr. 15 Str. *et totus*

<sup>67</sup> See Lazenby (1996) 63–4, 182 n. 8.

*hic locus de Naeuio belli Punici libro translatus est*)<sup>68</sup> and that Jupiter's prophecy must also be compared to the information supplied in Naevius (*ad* 1.273 = fr. 27 Str. *Naeuius et Ennius Aeneae ex filia nepotem Romulum conditorem urbis tradunt*, 'Naevius and Ennius say that Romulus, the founder of Rome, was the grandson of Aeneas via Aeneas' daughter'). Such references, when read together with Macrobius, strengthen the impression that we are indeed dealing with a passage 'taken' from Naevius. Even though vague expressions such as *hic locus totus sumptus a Naeuio est* ('the whole of this passage was taken from Naevius') must not necessarily be taken literally, Macrobius informs us that the first book of the *Bellum Punicum* similarly included Venus' lament to Jupiter during a storm that was tossing the Trojans, and Jupiter's response in the form of an optimistic prophecy:

Sunt alii loci plurimorum uersuum quos Maro in opus suum cum paucorum immutatione uerborum a ueteribus transtulit ... In primo Aeneidos tempestas describitur, et Venus apud Iouem queritur de periculis filii, et Iuppiter eam de futurorum prosperitate solatur. Hic locus totus sumptus a Naeuio est ex primo libro Belli Punici. Illic enim aeque Venus, Troianis tempestate laborantibus, cum Ioue queritur, et sequuntur uerba Iouis filiam consolantis spe futurorum.

(Macr. *Sat.* 6.2.30–1 = fr. 14 Str.)

There are other long passages that Virgil has adapted from ancient poems into his own by changing merely a few words ... In the first book of the *Aeneid* there is the description of a storm, and Venus complains to Jupiter about the dangers faced by her son, and Jupiter reassures her by telling her about the prosperity of his future descendants. The whole of this passage was taken from the first book of Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*: for there too Venus complains to Jupiter while the Trojans are struggling with the storm, and there follows the speech of Jupiter, who reassures his daughter to keep the hopes high for the future posterity.

The existence of such a scene in the *Bellum Punicum* would be further confirmed by two fragments that, although coming from different sources (Varro and Festus), are very likely

<sup>68</sup> A piece of information which could be supplemented with the recognised similarities between this passage and Horace's *Ode* 1.7 (see [Chapter 2](#) pp. 138–40): for a possible common Naevian source see Norden (1915) 171 n. 2 and M. Barchiesi (1962) 52 n. 220.

meant to be read together as Venus' prayer to her father,<sup>69</sup> and moreover fr. 10 Str., where the *senex* who addresses a prayer to Neptune has been identified with Anchises,<sup>70</sup> may also belong to the same context. It seems then that there is enough reason to believe Macrobius when he tells us that it is Naevius' poem that Virgil is following at the beginning of his epic, 'contaminating' it not only, as Naevius might well have done before him, with a rewriting of Homer's and Livius' *Odyssseys*, but also, as discussed in [Chapter 1](#), with echoes of those tragedies contemporary to Naevius.

Therefore, even though we do not know how Naevius connected this passage to the narration of the war, there is no doubt that this story was meant to fit somehow in the *Bellum Punicum* – which means, in other words, that it was clearly part of the (hi)story of the First Punic War. It is true that there is no indication that the tempest in Naevius drove the hero to the shores of Libya, but it is difficult to think of a more suitable connection between the 'Archaeology' and the *Bellum Punicum* other than the mythical *aition* for the outbreak of the wars against Carthage, namely the encounter between Aeneas and Dido. At least two more fragments would point in this direction, even though neither can be taken as incontrovertible evidence: at *A.* 4.9, Servius Danielis tells us that Naevius mentioned both Dido and Anna in his poem (fr. 21 Str. *cuius filiae fuerint Anna et Dido, Naeuius dicit*, 'whose daughters were Anna and Dido, as Naevius tells us'),<sup>71</sup> and the subject of the famous fr. 23 Str. (*blande et docte percontat, Aenea quo pacto | Troiam urbem liquerit*, '(s)he asks Aeneas, in a charming and

<sup>69</sup> Fr. 17 and fr. 18 Str. *patrem suum supremum optimum appellat | Summe deum regnator, quianam genus <od>isti?* ('She calls upon her father, the highest and best of the gods | "O greatest ruler of the gods, why do you hate my stock?")'; see M. Barchiesi (1962) 330–5.

<sup>70</sup> Fr. 10 Str. *senex fretus pietatei deum adlocutus | summi deum regis fratrem Neptunum | regnatorem marum* ('the old man, relying on his piety, addresses the god thus: "O Neptune, brother of the greatest king of the gods, ruler of the sea"'); see M. Barchiesi (1962) 416–20.

<sup>71</sup> It has also been suggested that Naevius narrated the love story between Aeneas and Anna, known by Varro (Serv. *ad A.* 5.4; DServ. *ad A.* 4.682) and famously narrated by Ovid (*Fast.* 3.545–674), rather than the one with Dido: see M. Barchiesi (1962) 191 n. 1026.

shrewd manner, how he left Troy’) has been identified by many with Dido, on the unfortunately too feeble basis of *A.* 1.670–1 (*nunc Phoenissa tenet Dido blandisque moratur | uocibus*, ‘now Phoenician Dido detains him, delaying him with charming words’, supplemented by the annotation that Plautus often uses *blandus* of women) and of Dido’s knowledge of Aeneas’ past toils (e.g. *A.* 1.630 *non ignara mali*, ‘not unaware of misfortune’).<sup>72</sup>

What concerns us in this chapter, however, is not so much the Dido episode in Naevius, but rather the First Punic War in Virgil, specifically at the beginning of *Aeneid* 1, where the poet seems to allude to the Roman history encoded in the ‘Greek’ myth. First, as we have seen, he discredits Naevius’ story of the ‘one ship’ built by Mercury<sup>73</sup> in favour of a twelve ships fleet more similar to a Roman military navy than to Odysseus’ ‘raft’. Shortly later, during the storm, we encounter an odd ‘Alexandrian footnote’ in Virgil’s reference to rocks called *Arae* (*A.* 1.109–10) which, as I have argued elsewhere in detail,<sup>74</sup> may be interpreted not only as a frontier between the territories of Rome and Carthage, but more specifically as a boundary marker between the myth of Aeneas and Dido and the history of the First Punic War. The Servian and DServian scholia to the passage state that these rocks, which are located between Africa and Sardinia, are the place where the Romans and the Carthaginians signed a treaty which determined that there lay the frontier between their respective spheres of influence. This mysterious treaty may be identified with the so-called treaty of Philinus, whose existence is still very much debated by scholars, and is a vital issue for the interpretation of the outbreak of

<sup>72</sup> See M. Barchiesi (1962) 477–82 and Wigodsky’s response (1972) 29–30.

<sup>73</sup> Together with this story, he also discredits the version of Aeneas’ flight from Troy before the capture of the city, as a reward by the Achaeans for the betrayal of Troy: this was believed to be Naevius’ version at least since Niebuhr (see M. Barchiesi (1962) 184), and frs. 5, 6 and 23 Str. could also point in this direction (Galinsky (1969a) 50). According to Servius, Virgil does not avoid hinting at this tradition, see Chapter 3, p. 111. However, the scholion by Servius Danielis may also refer to Mercury’s construction of a ship for Aeneas’ flight from Carthage, as M. Barchiesi believes (1962) 516–17.

<sup>74</sup> Giusti (2014b).



the First Punic War. Although the whole matter must remain in the realm of speculation, it is not a too far-fetched suggestion to imagine Naevius as Virgil's predecessor for the use of these *Arae* as a boundary marker between history and poetry.

For further and final evidence that Virgil had the First Punic War, or *Bellum Punicum*, in mind at the start of his Carthage episode, it is worth turning our attention once again to Naevius' so-called fragment of the Giants, already discussed in [Chapter 1](#),<sup>75</sup> and to the intriguing but artificial suggestion that this may provide us with the missing link between the history and the 'Archaeology' of Naevius' poem.

The existence of a fragment, ascribed by Charisius to the first book of the *Bellum Punicum*, which refers to Manius Valerius Maximus' expedition to Sicily in 263 BCE, one of the first military operations of the war (fr. 3 Str. *Manius Valerius | consul partem exerciti in expeditionem | ducit*, 'the consul Manius Valerius led part of the army in the expedition'), is a difficulty for the hypothesis that the 'Archaeology' opened Naevius' poem. Since Roman numbers are very liable to corruption in textual transmission, many editors have chosen not to accept Charisius' information and have either ascribed the fragment to Book 4, where the historical narrative, according to some reconstructions, may have started, or confined it to the group of those fragments *incertae sedis*.<sup>76</sup> Those who retain Charisius' numeration, however, are forced to acknowledge the presence of at least one 'story within a story'<sup>77</sup> in the structure of Naevius' poem.

As already discussed, the one possible point of contact between the historical poem and the 'Archaeology' has been found independently by scholars to be the fragment of the Giants (fr. 4 Str.). The fragment, if part of an ecphrasis of the Olympieion at Agrigentum, sits well both with the history of the First Punic War, opened by the siege of Agrigentum, and with the 'Archaeology' of Aeneas, since Diodorus tells us that the

<sup>75</sup> See [Chapter 1](#), pp. 58–61.

<sup>76</sup> See, for example, M. Barchiesi (1962) 391–6.

<sup>77</sup> Rowell (1947) 32.

Olympieion had porticoes which portrayed a Gigantomachy in the east pediment, and a capture of Troy in the west:

τῶν δὲ στοῶν τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὸ ὕψος ἐξάισιον ἔχουσῶν, ἐν μὲν τῷ πρὸς ἑὼ μέρει τὴν γιγαντομαχίαν ἐποίησαντο γλυφαῖς καὶ τῷ μεγέθει καὶ τῷ κάλλει διαφερούσαις, ἐν δὲ τῷ πρὸς δυσμᾶς τὴν ἄλωσιν τῆς Τροίας, ἐν ἣ τῶν ἡρώων ἕκαστον ἰδεῖν ἔστιν οἰκείως τῆς περιστάσεως δεδημιουργημένον.

(Diod. 13.82.4)

The porticoes were of enormous size and height, and in the east pediment they portrayed the battle between the Gods and the Giants in sculptures which excelled in size and beauty, and in the west the capture of Troy, in which each one of the heroes may be seen portrayed in a manner appropriate to his role.

The two fragments transmitted by Servius Danielis on Naevius' *Iliupersis*, one with the Trojan wives (perhaps of Aeneas and Antenor) leaving Troy at night,<sup>78</sup> and another containing a possible hint at Aeneas' (and Antenor's) betrayal,<sup>79</sup> would therefore belong to a missing second section of the ecphrasis, where the poet would have started a digression on the flight of Aeneas, thus transforming the ecphrasis into the 'Archaeology'.<sup>80</sup>

Many doubts and sceptical responses, admittedly alongside much enthusiasm, greeted such reconstruction when it was finally crystallised in Strzelecki's Teubneriana. However, the picture remains a captivating one for its repercussions in the *Aeneid*. Among the many hypotheses put forward for the location of the fragment,<sup>81</sup> it is unsurprising that at least four of them display the urgent need to link the passage with the

<sup>78</sup> DServius *ad A.* 3.10 = fr. 5 Str. *amborum uxores | noctu Troiad exibant capitibus optertis | flentes ambae, abeuntes, lacrimis cum multis*, 'the wives of both men were leaving Troy at night, with their heads covered, both weeping, going away with many tears'.

<sup>79</sup> DServius *ad A.* 2.797 = fr. 6 Str. *eorum sectam sequuntur multi mortales, | multi alii e Troia strenui iuri, | ubi foras cum auro illi<n>c exibant*, 'many mortals follow their path; many other strong men from Troy, when they were passing outdoors there with gold'.

<sup>80</sup> This theory forms the new numbering of Strzelecki (1964), where the fragment of Manius Valerius (32 in Morel's numbering) becomes third, the one of the Giants (19 M) fourth, followed by the two DServian scholia: 5 (4 M) and 6 (5 M). The reconstruction is not followed by Blänsdorf (2011), who has the fragment of the Giants (8 Blänsdorf) follow the flight of Aeneas (fr. 5 and 6 Blänsdorf).

<sup>81</sup> The most plausible of which are: a hero's (Aeneas') shield (E. Fraenkel (1954)), a krater, a temple, a ship (either Duilius' or Aeneas'): see the detailed discussion in M. Barchiesi (1962) 277–80.

famous ecphraseis of the *Aeneid*: the shield of Aeneas, the temple at Cuma and the temple at Carthage. This procedure, of course, runs all the risks inherent in reading Naevius through Virgil, but on the other hand it also testifies to the importance of Naevius' poem as an early Latin model for Virgil's handling of ecphraseis. In addition to this, the theory of the temple of Agrigentum was put forward long before the importance of Gigantomachy in the *Aeneid* – especially, but not only, in the Carthaginian episode – had been properly recognised.<sup>82</sup>

Whatever one makes of the reconstruction, the appreciation that both Naevius' and Diodorus' passages might be relevant to the first book of the *Aeneid* generates fascinating possibilities. Although the scenes of Virgil's Carthaginian temple are properly specified as 'paintings' (*A.* 1.464 *pictura*), whereas the pictures of the temple of Agrigentum are 'carved' (γλυφαῖς), not only the similarity between Virgil's detailed description of each hero and Diodorus' brief statement that 'each one of the heroes may be seen portrayed in a manner appropriate to his role' (τῶν ἡρώων ἕκαστον ἰδεῖν ἔστιν οἰκείως τῆς περιστάσεως δεδημιουργημένον) is suggestive, but more specifically the location of the pictures in both temples seems to correspond. The temple in Carthage is, like the one in Agrigentum, of great size and splendour, and the text lingers for two lines on the solemn description of its entrance (*A.* 1.448–9 *aerea cui gradibus surgebant limina nexaeque | aere trabes, foribus cardo stridebat aënis*, 'at the top of the steps the threshold was of bronze, the beams were jointed with bronze, and the bronze doors grated as they turned in their sockets'). Shortly afterwards, readers follow Aeneas inside the temple, beneath the porticoes, where we are told that he had actually been staring at something else (*singula*, 453) before he finally catches sight of the capture of Troy:

namque sub ingenti lustrat dum singula templo  
reginam opperiens, dum quae fortuna sit urbi  
artificumque manus inter se operumque laborem  
miratur, uidet Iliacas ex ordine pugnas ...

(*A.* 1.453–6)

<sup>82</sup> Since Hardie (1986).

## The First Punic War – or *Bellum Punicum*

And while waiting for the queen and studying every single thing under the roof of this enormous temple, while he was wondering about the fortune of the city and the skill of the workmen and the effort of their work, suddenly he sees, laid out in order, the Trojan battles ...

The *inerant* of Naevius' fragment (fr. 4.1 Str. *inerant signa expressa*, 'there were included fashioned representations') might similarly suggest that the *signa expressa* are 'inside' something which was specified before the ecphrasis. However, whatever object or monument included Naevius' Giants is no less destined to remain a mystery than the subject of the *singula* at which Aeneas stares before he stumbles upon the more significant scenes of his own life. These *singula* are, even for the more optimistic, Joyce's 'Man in the Macintosh' – just another element to add to the list of literary 'Secrecy'.<sup>83</sup>

And yet the presence of the temple of Agrigentum at this stage of the poem, where the future inscribed in the city of Carthage is part of myth's past, and the city itself is, as we shall see in detail, already destroyed before it has been properly constructed, would add another *urbs capta* to the topos which has Troy as its fundamental paradigm.<sup>84</sup> Thus, between the reverberations of the myth of Troy and the history of Agrigentum, Aeneas' wonder about the 'fortune' of a city which – readers know well – will be razed to the ground (*quae fortuna sit urbi ... miratur*) must sound tragically ironic, with *fortuna* becoming a highly double-edged word. Here again, the Punic Wars lurk in a 'future in the background' as if they were part of a history that has already happened, and one of the first significant episodes of the First Punic War suddenly gives way to the last days of the Third, while linking all these times to Troy, in an unstoppable chain of endless repetition.

<sup>83</sup> See Kermode (1979).

<sup>84</sup> Agrigentum was brutally sacked by the Romans, and almost the entire population sold into slavery: see Pol. 1.19.14–15 and Diod. 23.9.1. For the topos of the *urbs capta* in the *Aeneid*, see Rossi (2004a) 17–53, Keith (2016) and Chapter 4.4.

#### 4.4 The Second Punic War – Dido in the Light of Ennius Livy

Halfway through Book 1, Aeneas tells his mother in disguise that he would be able to recount his misfortunes, had she the time to hear them. *Annales* is the word he uses to define this story, i.e. the contents of Books 2 and 3 (*A.* 1.373 *et uacet annalis nostrorum audire laborum*, ‘if you had the time to listen to the annals of our suffering’) – a specific kind of history, as Servius tells us: not the one that we could see/witness (Serv. *ad A.* 1.373 *historia est eorum temporum quae uel uidimus uel uidere potuimus, dicta ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰστορεῖν, id est uidere*, ‘history concerns those times that we saw, or could have seen; hence its etymology from ἰστορεῖν, that is “to see”’), but the history that our era does not know by first hand, that which is based on word of mouth, hence *audire* (Serv. *ad A.* 1.373 *annales uero sunt eorum temporum, quae aetas nostra non nouit*, ‘the *annales* instead concern those times that our generation does not know’).<sup>85</sup> After the allusions to the *Bellum Punicum* in the storm that tosses the hero to Carthage, and in line with the possibility that the arrival at Carthage’s harbour already looks forward to the Hannibalic War by reminding us of the harbour of Carthago Nova in Spain,<sup>86</sup> *annales* not only highlights the poem’s relationship to historiography already before the arrival at the city, but may also signal a shift from First to Second Punic War – from Naevius to Ennius, who narrated the Second Punic War in Books 7–9 of his *Annales*.<sup>87</sup>

As noted by Gildenhard (acknowledging John Henderson) and Goldschmidt,<sup>88</sup> the description of Sicily inserted as the *sphragis* to Aeneas’ *Annales* at 3.692–708, just before mention of Anchises’ death, is a brief survey of *nomina* ‘with etymological footnote’ which ominously resound with the traumatic memory of the First Punic conflict: Agrigentum (3.703 *arduus*

<sup>85</sup> On the contrast, see Chapter 3, pp. 106–7. On the passage, Leigh (2007) 485, Elliott (2013) 25–6, 58–60, endorsing the idea that the distinction may have been operative in Ennius’ time.

<sup>86</sup> See n. 54.

<sup>87</sup> On the section as a whole, see Fabrizi (2012) 151–77.

<sup>88</sup> Gildenhard (2012) 44–5, Goldschmidt (2013) 111–15.

... *Acragas*), besieged and captured by the Romans in 261 BCE; Selinus (3.705), destroyed by the Carthaginians in 250 BCE; Lilybaeum, besieged in vain by the Romans since 250 BCE and characterised by ‘hidden rocks’ (3.706 *saxis ... caecis*) which had caused an accident to a Roman fleet in 253 BCE; Drepanum, with its ‘unhappy shore’ (3.707 *inlaetabilis ora*), ‘because of the ill-omened battle that took place here in 249 BCE, Rome’s most serious naval defeat of the war’.<sup>89</sup>

This kind of bird’s-eye view of Sicily at the close of Book 3, when read alongside the allusions to the First Punic War in Book 1, may confirm that we are about to enter a new historical territory, namely the allegory of the Second Punic War lurking behind its mythological *aition*, the story of Aeneas and Dido foregrounded in Book 4. This expectation, however, is partially frustrated: readers will have to wait until the second half of the epic before encountering more secure Ennian echoes of the Hannibalic War applied to the wars in Latium. Book 7 of the *Aeneid* appears to retrace some key moments of Book 7 of Ennius’ *Annales*: the similarities between Ennius’ *Paluda uirago* and Virgil’s Allecto (cf. *Ann.* 220–1 Sk. and *A.* 7.324–9),<sup>90</sup> the allusion to the opening of the gates of war by Discordia in Juno’s opening of the gates of Janus (cf. *Ann.* 225–6 Sk. *postquam Discordia taetra | belli ferratos postes portasque refregit*, ‘after foul Discordia broke open the iron-bound doors and gates of war’ and *A.* 7.622 *Belli ferratos rumpit Saturnia postis*, ‘Saturnian Juno bursts open the iron-bound gates of war’)<sup>91</sup> and the parallel catalogues of warriors in *Aeneid* 7 and *Annales* 7.<sup>92</sup> The last three books of the poem will each also feature its specifically Ennian/Hannibalic moment: the already mentioned ‘Turnus *ad portas*’ in Book 9 (9.52–8),<sup>93</sup> the ‘Ennian’

<sup>89</sup> Goldschmidt (2013) 115.

<sup>90</sup> Norden (1915) 10–40, E. Fraenkel (1945) 7–8 and 12–14, Fordyce (1977) 124, Goldschmidt (2013) 135.

<sup>91</sup> Norden (1915) 18–20, Horsfall (2000) 355–6, Fabrizi (2012) 155–63, Goldschmidt (2013) 136–9. See also what Horsfall (2000) xx and 360 dubs Virgil’s ‘formal bow’ to Ennius’ *Discordia* at 7.545 *en, perfecta tibi bello discordia tristi*, ‘look! Discord has been accomplished by you in grim war’.

<sup>92</sup> E. Fraenkel (1945) 8–12, Skutsch (1985) 409.

<sup>93</sup> See p. 202, with Horsfall (1974), Hardie (1994) 81, Goldschmidt (2013) 140–4.

council of the gods at the beginning of Book 10 (with specific reference to Hannibal's march through the Alps),<sup>94</sup> Turnus as a Carthaginian lion (*A.* 12.4–9)<sup>95</sup> and Juno's reconciliation in Book 12.<sup>96</sup> Again, it is in the second half of the poem that we find a large number of probable echoes of Ennius' *Annales*.<sup>97</sup> In addition, a retrospective reading of the opening of Silius' *Punica* indicates that Silius too read Virgil's wars in Latium as a proto-Hannibalic War, and therefore a suitable model for his own epic: the Carthaginians' defeat at the Aegates Islands is presented in terms closely reminiscent of Juno's failure to wreck Aeneas' fleet at the beginning of the *Aeneid*, and as the reason for which she will soon take arms again (*Pun.* 1.33–6 *sed enim conamine primae | contuso pugnae fractisque in gurgite coeptis | Sicanio Libycis iterum instaurata capessens | arma remolitur*, 'but when the effort of the First War was crushed and the plans wrecked in the Sicilian sea, then again Juno takes up arms for a new conflict') – an attack which is explicitly directed against 'the realm of Latinus' (*Pun.* 1.40 *in regna Latini*).

<sup>94</sup> The council seems modelled on *Annales* 1, but Norden (1915) 41–53 argued for a second council of the gods at the opening of *Annales* 7. See Skutsch (1985) 412–14, Goldschmidt (2013) 127–31; cf. Elliott (2013) 45–6 on how the scholars' insistence in placing the council in Book 1 only is based on the unfounded prejudice that divine intervention would not be fitting for the historical sections of the *Annales*.

<sup>95</sup> Goldschmidt (2013) 145–6.

<sup>96</sup> *A.* 12.791–842; see Serv. *ad* 1.281: *bello Punico secundo, ut ait Ennius, placata Iuno coepit fauere Romanis*, 'it was during the Second Punic War, as Ennius says, that Juno was placated and started to support the Romans' and *ad* 12.841: *constat bello Punico secundo exoratam Iunonem*, 'it is well known that Juno was placated during the Second Punic War', with Feeney (1984), Tarrant (2012) 290–1, Fabrizi (2012) 163–72, Goldschmidt (2013) 103–4.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. *A.* 7.634 *levis ocreas lento ducunt argento* and *Ann.* 239 *Sk. deducunt habiles gladios filo gracilento*; *A.* 8.596 *quadripedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum* and *Ann.* 242 *explorant Numidae, totam quatit ungula terram* and *Ann.* 263 *consequitur summo sonitu quatit ungula terram*; *A.* 10.6–7 *quianam sententia uobis | uersa retro* (cf. also 1.237) and *Ann.* 246 *quianam dictis nostris sententia flexa est?*; *A.* 10.284 *audentis Fortuna iuuat* and *Ann.* 233 *fortibus est fortuna uiris data*; *A.* 11.425–7 *multa dies uariique labor mutabilis aevi | rettulit in melius, multos alterna reuisens | lusit et in solido rursus Fortuna locauit* and *Ann.* 258–60 *multa dies in bello conficit unus | et rursus multae fortunae forte recumbunt: | haud quaquam quemquam semper fortuna secuta est*; *A.* 12.284 *tempestas telorum ac ferreus ingruit imber* and *Ann.* 266 *hastati spargunt hastas. fit ferreus imber*; *A.* 12.565 *ne qua meis esto dictis mora, Iuppiter hac stat* and *Ann.* 232 *non semper uostra euortit: nunc Iuppiter hac stat*. See also Turnus under heavy fire at *A.* 9.806–14, modelled on both Homer (*Il.* 16.102–11) and Ennius (*Ann.* 391–8), with Hardie (1994) 245–6.



The presentation of the wars in Latium as not only a proto-Civil and proto-Social,<sup>98</sup> but also proto-Hannibalic War must be connected with the link between Civil and Punic Wars which is established by the Augustan authors. In addition, it also turns the wars in Latium into a direct consequence of Dido's curse (*A.* 4.629 *pugnent ipsi*, 'let they themselves fight'), by linking Dido's avenger to the Hannibalic Turnus, who is subtly joined with the Carthaginian queen at the very close of the poem (cf. 4.660 *sic, sic iuuat ire sub umbras*, 'this, this is how it pleases me to go down among the shades', and 12.952 *uitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras*, 'and his life fled with a groan, indignant, among the shades').<sup>99</sup> However, this does not mean that Ennian or Hannibalic echoes are not present in the Aeneas and Dido story as well. For instance, it is worth noticing how the origin of the conflict between Aeneas and Dido, the 'aition's aition', is based, like the outbreaks of both First and Second Punic Wars, on a clash of interpretations over a *foedus*<sup>100</sup> which Dido considers a *coniugium* (4.172) and Aeneas, famously, does not (4.338–9 *nec coniugis umquam | praetendi taedas aut haec in foedera ueni*, 'nor have I ever held the wedding torches or entered into such contract with you'). In Dido's view, the proto-Roman Aeneas now rightly deserves the commonly Carthaginian label of *foedifragus*: he is the untrustworthy character (*perfidus*, 4.305, 366, 421),<sup>101</sup> the one who 'dissimulates' (4.305), committing 'acts of impiety' (596 *facta impia*) towards Carthage and, according to some versions, including that of Naevius, against Troy itself.<sup>102</sup> If we read *Aeneid* 4 in historical terms, the opposing interpretations of Dido and Aeneas' union in the cave concern the 'pretext'

<sup>98</sup> See n. 24.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. also Dido's threat at *A.* 4.386 *omnibus umbra locis adero*, 'wherever you are, I shall be your shadow'. For the connection between Dido and the wars in Latium, see Monti (1981) 83–96.

<sup>100</sup> On the wedding as a *foedus*, in the sense of a 'political union', see Monti (1981) 1–36. For a reading of the whole *Aeneid* as a map of violated *foedera*, see Gladhill (2009) and (2016) 119–67.

<sup>101</sup> See Ahl (1989) 23, Starks (1989), Casali (1999).

<sup>102</sup> I take *facta impia* to refer to Aeneas' actions rather than Dido's, with Casali (1999). For its indirect reference to Dido, see Monti (1981) 62–8.



(πρόφασις) of the conflict, whereas its real 'cause' (αἰτία) needs to be found – paradoxically – in the future wars that have made this fictional *aition* necessary and, in turn, in their own causes. While the connection between *Aeneid* 4 and the Punic Wars is moved to the background in the unfolding of the love story, things start to look different as soon as the pact among the two leaders is broken, and the tragic future of the site does not escape the vigilant eyes of Dido, to whom the Trojans leaving Carthage appear similar to a column of ants gathering food (*A.* 4.402–7). As Sergio Casali among others has pointed out, the simile is proleptic of the looting of Carthage on behalf of their Roman descendants, while it also continues to call to mind Aeneas' Hannibalic behaviour and the need for a pay-back, if we are to believe Servius when he tells us that line 4.404 (*it nigrum campis agmen*, 'over the plain moves a black column') was originally applied by Ennius to elephants – possibly Hannibal's elephants.<sup>103</sup>

While *Aeneid* 4 features at least another probable Ennian echo, which I will address in due course, it also displays more easily traceable connections with the last book of Livy's third decade, *Ab Urbe Condita* 30. These connections add up to the suggestion that a dialogue is at work between Virgil and Livy, without ruling out the likelihood that Ennius' *Annales* may be identified as their common source, especially given Livy's probable intense engagement with the *Annales*.<sup>104</sup> In what follows, I analyse three passages of Livy's Book 30 and their Virgilian 'doubles': the continuity between Dido's curse at *A.* 4.622–9 and Hannibal's 'curse' at Liv. 30.44.7–8; the similarities between Dido's immediately preceding monologue at *A.* 4.590–621 and Hannibal's speech to Scipio before Zama at Liv. 30.30; and finally the overlaps between the story of Aeneas and Dido and the episode of Masinissa and Sophoniba at Liv. 30.12–15. As I will show with reference to a few Ennian

<sup>103</sup> See Casali (1999) 207–8 and Giusti (2014a) 39–40 with further bibliography. Note that the Trojans-ants appear to associate rather with the Greeks looting Troy, if they are meant to recall the Myrmidones (from μύρμηξ, 'ant').

<sup>104</sup> On which see Elliott (2009) and (2013) 80, 210–19 with further bibliography.

fragments, there may be some reason to believe that at least the last two of these episodes can be traced back to the *Annales*.

#### 4.4.1 Dido's Curse

The *Aeneid* contains only two references to Hannibal, although in neither is the Carthaginian commander actually named. The more unequivocal is found in the divine council at the beginning of Book 10, where Jupiter explicitly foresees the crossing of the Alps:

adueniet iustum pugnae (ne arcessite) tempus,  
cum fera Karthago Romanis arcibus olim  
exitium magnum atque Alps immittet apertas:  
tum certare odiis, tum res rapuisse licebit.

(A. 10.11–14)

The right time for battle will come (do not hasten it), when ferocious Carthage will one day let destruction loose upon the Roman citadels, opening up the Alps: then shall it be allowed to fight with hate, then shall it be lawful to ravage.

Similarities with Livy's third decade may be detected here, first in the use of the adjective *iustus* in relation to the time (*tempus*) of the conflict that Livy recognised as a *bellum iustum* in Book 30,<sup>105</sup> and more specifically in the emphasis on the fact that the war will be fought with hate rather than strength, a motif that similarly opens the third decade (cf. A. 10.14 *tum certare odiis* and Liv. 21.1.3 *odiis etiam prope maioribus certarunt quam uiribus*, 'for they almost fought more with hate than strength') and which is traceable with some likelihood to Ennius, especially in view of the possibility that Virgil's model for the passage was a *concilium deorum* which opened the account of the Second Punic War in *Annales* 7.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>105</sup> 30.16.9 and 30.31.4. See also Burck (1971) 25.

<sup>106</sup> See n. 94. It is also worth noticing that the only explicit Ennian quotation (*Ann.* 363 Sk.) in the whole of Livy's third decade (Liv. 30.26.9 *nihil certius est quam unum hominem nobis cunctando rem restituisse, sicut Ennius ait*, 'nothing is more certain than that one man by delaying restored our state, as Ennius says') is a line famously exploited by Virgil (A. 6.846); see Elliott (2009).

The same emphasis on hatred (4.623 *exercete odiis*) appears in the only other passage where Hannibal may be envisaged, Dido's curse against the Romans:

tum uos, o Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne futurum  
exercete odiis, cinerique haec mittite nostro  
munera. nullus amor populis nec foedera sunt.  
exoriare aliquis nostris ex ossibus ultor  
qui face Dardanio ferroque sequare colonos,  
nunc, olim, quocumque dabunt se tempore uires.  
litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas  
imprecor, arma armis: pugnent ipsique nepotesque.

(A. 4.622–9)

Then you, my Tyrians, pursue his stock with hatred, and the  
whole line of his descendants to come; send these offerings to my  
ashes. Let there be no love between our people, no treaties. Rise  
from my bones, avenger: you shall follow the Dardanian settlers  
with fire and sword. Now, one day, whenever there is strength.  
Shores against shores, waters against waters – this I pray, weapons  
against weapons: let them fight, they themselves, and their  
descendants.

Here the reference to the Punic commander is more oblique but appeared equally certain to commentators at least since Servius (*ad.* 4.625: *et ostendit Hannibalem*, ‘and she reveals Hannibal’). Hannibal is presented as divested of his historical features and dressed up as the Erinys of Clytemnestra which previously haunted Dido's dreams (cf. 4.626 *face ... ferroque sequare* with 4.472 *armatam facibus matrem et serpentibus atris*, ‘[Orestes] mother, armed with torches and black snakes’) in order to act like the ἀλάστωρ, the vindictive demon through which Dido's own daemon will reproduce. In view of the similarities with both Clytemnestra and the ‘reproductive daemon’ of Medea,<sup>107</sup> Hannibal paradoxically embodies both the offspring of a woman who “conceives” not a child, but *furias* (4.474),<sup>108</sup> and the mother who exacts vengeance from the children (4.622 *stirpem et genus*) that she wished had been

<sup>107</sup> On Medea as a ‘reproductive demon’ see Johnston (1997) 65.

<sup>108</sup> Schiesaro (2008) 205–6.

hers.<sup>109</sup> And yet, Dido's use of Aeschylean allusions in this passage casts her on the side of those who are right in taking their revenge for having been treated unjustly: she aligns herself with Cassandra (*Ag.* 1280 ἔξει γὰρ ἡμῶν ἄλλος αὖ τιμάορος, 'yet another will come, to take vengeance for us') and visualises her revenge on the model of the Greeks' payback against the Persians (*Pers.* 354 φανείς ἀλάστωρ ἢ κακὸς δαίμων ποθέν, 'an avenging demon, or an evil spirit, appeared from somewhere'). The 'barbarian' Hannibal thus paradoxically becomes a new Themistocles and a new Orestes, the latter a character which in its vindictive shape seems to have been a model for Octavian in Augustan propaganda.<sup>110</sup>

Alongside its tragic models, Dido's curse also displays significant parallels with at least two passages of Livy's third decade. I have already discussed the first, Hannibal's oath against the Romans (*Liv.* 21.1.4), and argued that Hannibal is here presented in such a way as to create an historical *continuum* to the mythical character of Dido, something which Silius' epic will pick up.<sup>111</sup> If the first passage is right at the beginning of the decade, the second is found instead towards the close of Book 30. Here the connection relies on the idea, already expressed by Servius and endorsed by some scholars,<sup>112</sup> that the phrase *pugnent ipsique nepotesque* alludes not only to the Punic, but also to the Civil Wars (*Serv. ad A.* 4.629 *potest et ad ciuile bellum referri*, 'it can also refer to Civil War'), an interpretation that may be confirmed by a retrospective reading of the beginning of Lucan's *Pharsalia* as alluding to this very passage (cf. *A.* 4.628–9 *litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas ... arma armis* and *Luc.* 1.6–7 *infestisque obuia signis | signa, pares aquilas et pila minantia pilis*, 'standards hostile against standards, eagles matched by eagles, and javelins threatening

<sup>109</sup> See Dido's wish for Aeneas' offspring at *A.* 4.327–30.

<sup>110</sup> On Orestes and Augustus, see Dewar (1988) and (1990), Hölscher (1991), Cecioni (1993), Champlin (2003) 308–11, Tilg (2008), Rebeggiani (2016).

<sup>111</sup> See Chapter 3.3, p. 180. On Silius' epic as sprung from Dido's curse, see Hardie (1993) 64–5, Ganiban (2010).

<sup>112</sup> See Reeve (1987) and Levene (2010) 12, although not all scholars read a reference to the Civil Wars in Dido's curse.

javelins').<sup>113</sup> Therefore Dido's curse, taken to refer to the Civil Wars alongside the Punic conflict, has been connected by Michael Reeve<sup>114</sup> with a similar statement pronounced by the defeated Hannibal towards the close of the third decade, where he prompts the Carthaginians to rejoice with the Sallustian idea that once the Punic Wars are over and Carthage razed to the ground, the Romans will be forced to wage war against their own civic body:

nec est cur uos otio uestro consultum ab Romanis credatis. nulla magna ciuitas diu quiescere potest. si foris hostem non habet, domi inuenit, ut praeualida corpora ab externis causis tuta uidentur sed suis ipsa uiribus onerantur.

(Liv. 30.44.7–8)

Nor is there a reason why you should think that the Romans are content with your rest. No great state can stay at peace for long. If it lacks an enemy abroad, it finds one at home, just as powerful bodies seem protected from external illnesses, but end up weighed down by the burden of their own strength.

This is virtually the only extant passage where Livy explicitly subscribes to Sallust's theory that the Republic collapsed after *metus hostilis* was removed, a matter which must have received full treatment in the account of the debate between Scipio Nasica and Cato on the destruction of Carthage, according to the *Periocha* of Book 49. There is no doubt that Livy endorsed the common – not only Sallustian – view of a degeneration of Rome's customs from the second century BCE,<sup>115</sup> but it is noteworthy that the only reference to *metus hostilis* should be expressed by the arch-enemy of the Republic in what sounds more like an epic curse than an historical reflection. On the one hand, in line with the Thucydidean echoes in the preface

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Roche (2009) 108. Yet Lucan seems to contaminate Virgil with Ennius, see *Ann.* 582 Sk. *pila retunduntur uenientibus obuia pilis*, 'javelins blunt and are blunted against incoming javelins'.

<sup>114</sup> Reeve (1987); see also Levene (2010) 12.

<sup>115</sup> On the basis of this passage, scholars have suggested that Livy not only endorsed Sallust's theorem, but also dated the beginning of Rome's decline to 146 BCE, even though at 39.6–7 he explicitly ascribes the crisis to the return of Manlius Vulso's army from Asia in 187 BCE. See Earl (1961) 49, McGushin (1992) 79, Rossi (2004b) 378, Jacobs (2010) 125, Levene (2010) 12. On Livy's endorsement of *metus hostilis* in the first decade see Oakley (1997) 612–13.

to the third decade,<sup>116</sup> Hannibal's speech partially reflects Alcibiades' remarks that 'the state, if it remains at peace, will, like anything else, wear itself out upon itself' (Thuc. 6.18.6 τὴν πόλιν, ἂν μὲν ἡσυχάζῃ, τρίψεσθαι τε αὐτὴν περὶ αὐτὴν ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλο τι) and that 'a state which is accustomed to activity would very quickly be ruined by a change to inactivity' (6.18.7 παράπαν τε γινώσκω πόλιν μὴ ἀπράγμονα τάχιστ' ἂν μοι δοκεῖν ἀπραγμοσύνης μεταβολῇ διαφθαρῆναι). However, if one wants to 'hurry to reach these modern times, in which the might of a people which has long been powerful is working its own undoing' (Liv. *Praef.* 4 *festinantibus ad haec noua, quibus iam pridem praeualentis populi uires se ipsae conficiunt*), it is possible to read the passage together with the prophecy of the third Sibylline oracle inscribed in Horace's *Epode* 16 (Hor. *Epod.* 16.1.2 *altera iam teritur bellis ciuilibus aetas | suis et ipsa Roma uiribus ruit*, 'already another generation is worn out by Civil War, and Rome itself collapses under its own strength'; cf. *Or. Sib.* 3.363–4 ἔσται καὶ Σάμος ἄμμος, ἐσεῖται Δῆλος ἄδηλος | καὶ Ῥώμη ῥύμη ... 'and Samos shall be sand, Delos shall be obscure, and Rome shall ruin')<sup>117</sup> and interpret it as Hannibal's prophecy of the Civil Wars at Rome, parallel to the curse of Dido, with its presentation of the Civil Wars as both Dido's and Hannibal's revenge.

#### 4.4.2 *Dido and Hannibal*

Dido's curse is only the finale of one of Dido's last tragic monologues (*A.* 4.590–629), which I believe contains other relevant Hannibalic echoes. Just like Hannibal at 30.44 (the same chapter of the prophecy), Dido similarly deplores the bad timing of the realisation of her misfortunes (cf. *A.* 4.596–7 *infelix Dido, nunc te facta impia tangunt? | tum decuit, cum sceptras dabas* ..., 'wretched Dido, now his impious deeds

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Liv. 21.1.1 *bellum maxime omnium memorabile quae umquam gesta sint* with Thuc. 1.1 ἐλπίσας μέγαν τε ἔσεσθαι καὶ ἀξιολογώτατον τῶν προγεγενημένων and 1.2 *nam neque ualidiores opibus ullae inter se ciuitates gentesque contulerunt arma* with Thuc. 1.1 ἀκμάζοντές τε ἦσαν ἐς αὐτὸν ἀμφοτέροι παρασκευῇ τῇ πάσῃ ...

<sup>117</sup> See Macleod (1979).

touch you? They should have touched you then, when you gave him the sceptre ...' and Hannibal's speech to his men at Liv. 30.44.7 *tunc flesse decuit cum adempta sunt nobis arma, incensae naues, interdictum externis bellis ...*, 'then should you have cried, when our arms were taken from us, our ships burnt, foreign wars forbidden ...') and similarly foresees the approach of the end (cf. 4.604 *moritura*, 610 *morientis Elissae* and Hannibal's foreknowledge at 30.44.11 *quam uereor ne propediem sentiat is leuissimo in malo uos hodie lacrimasse!*, 'how much I fear that you will soon realise that today you have been crying for a very slight misfortune!'). Interestingly, Dido admits that 'the fortune of the battle would have been in the balance' (4.603 *uerum anceps pugnae fuerat fortuna*), but that she was very close to victory, since she could have easily carried fire to Aeneas' camp (4.604–6 *faces in castra tulissem ...*). The statement closely resembles both Livy's opening account of the war (21.1.2 *adeo uaria fortuna belli ancepsque Mars fuit ut propius periculum fuerint qui uicerunt*, 'and so variable was the fortune of war and the outcome so uncertain that those who ultimately conquered had actually been closer to ruin'), and Hannibal's words to Scipio before Zama, where he poignantly remarks that he had 'often had the victory almost in his grasp' (Liv. 30.30.3 *totiens prope in manibus uictoriam habui*) and that it is all a matter of dwindling fortune and its reversals, since 'the greatest good fortune is always the least to be trusted' (30.30.18 *maximae cuique fortunae minime credendum est*).<sup>118</sup>

Hannibal's speech at Livy 30.30 also displays another couple of curious thematic and linguistic similarities with the Aeneas and Dido episode. On the one hand, there is the recognition, analysed at length by Andreola Rossi,<sup>119</sup> of the clear

<sup>118</sup> See also Liv. 30.30.5 *hoc quoque ludibrium casus ediderit fortuna*, 'this also may prove to be fortune's mocking sport'; 30.30.9 *in meliore uestra fortuna*, 'while fortune is favouring you'; 30.30.11–12 *non temere incerta casuum reputat quem fortuna numquam decepit*, 'it is not easy for a man who has never been deceived by fortune to weigh uncertain chances'; 30.30.15 *et mihi talis aliquando fortuna adfulsit*, 'on me too such fortune once shone'.

<sup>119</sup> Rossi (2004b).

mirroring of Hannibal and Scipio, epitomised by Hannibal in statements such as 30.30.12 *quod ego fui ad Trasimenum, ad Cannas, id tu hodie es* ('what I was at Trasimene and Cannae, you are today') or 30.30.16 *et mihi talis aliquando fortuna adfuit* ('on me too such fortune once shone'), the latter of which reminds one of the correspondence between Dido's and Aeneas' destinies, similarly expressed by Dido at *A.* 1.628–9 *me quoque per multos similis fortuna labores | iactatam hac demum uoluit consistere terra* ('I, too, was tossed by a similar fortune through many toils, until at last I have been allowed to settle in this land'). In addition, Hannibal's recognition of the suspicions of *Punica fides* on the Romans' part (30.30.27 *haud negauerim propter non nimis sincere petitam aut exspectatam nuper pacem suspectam esse uobis Punicam fidem*, 'I would not deny that, on account of our lack of sincerity in seeking peace, and because we did not wait for it, you have been suspicious of Punic faith') also finds a parallel in Juno's recognition of Venus' suspicion at *A.* 4.96–7 (*nec me adeo fallit ueritam te moenia nostra | suspectas habuisse domos Karthaginis altae*, 'I do not fail to see that you have always been afraid of our walls, and have long been suspicious of the homes of lofty Carthage'), a passage whose martial colouring is emphasised by Juno's reference to Venus and Cupid's success in making Dido fall in love with Aeneas as the attainment of 'wide spoils' (4.93 *spolia ampla*).

Yet the most interesting parallel between Hannibal at Livy 30.30 and *Aeneid* 4 could be traced to Ennius' *Annales*. In his speech in Livy, Hannibal stresses the rapid volatility of Fortune, insisting twice on the unit of the hour as the measure of time in which a swift reversal of circumstances could occur (30.30.19 *ne tot annorum felicitatem in unius horae dederis discrimen*, 'do not commit the success of so many years to the test of a single hour'; 30.30.21 *simul parta ac sperata decora unius horae fortuna euertere potest*, 'the fortune of a single hour can overturn the honours already won, and those in prospect'). This finds a direct parallel in a fragment of the *Annales* which is quoted by Macrobius (Macr. 6.2.12) because of its similarities with a passage of *Aeneid* 11:



## Virgil's Punic/Civil Wars as Unspeakable

multa dies in bello conficit unus  
et rursus multae fortunae forte recumbunt:  
haudquaquam quemquam semper fortuna secuta est.  
(*Enn. Ann.* 258–60 Sk.)

many things does a single day accomplish in war, and by chance  
many fortunes relapse again: there is no one whom fortune has  
followed always, and anywhere.

multa dies uariique labor mutabilis aevi  
rettulit in melius, multos alterna reuisens  
lusit et in solido rursus Fortuna locauit.  
(*A.* 11.425–7)

many things are changed for the better with the passing of the days  
and the ever-changing workings of time. Fortune has mocked many  
by coming and going, and yet placed them back again on solid  
ground.

Skutsch attributes the fragment to a speech of Aemilius Paullus holding the soldiers from going after the enemy after a victory of Terentius Varro, an episode which is briefly related by Livy (22.41.2–3) but without any insertion of the speech. In Skutsch's view, the fragment, which is a warning against trusting Fortune, since *one day only* may be sufficient to spin the circumstances upside down, would fit the speech of a consul who is keeping his army from fighting further. However, he himself admits that, if Virgil alludes to Ennius at *A.* 11.425–7, 'he has greatly altered the sense', since Turnus is there urging continuance of the war, and thus actually playing Terentius Varro's role rather than Aemilius Paullus'.<sup>120</sup>

In my view, Ennius' fragment is rather closely reminiscent of Hannibal's reflections on Fortune at Liv. 30.30, and it may also be connected to Dido's supplication for receiving more time at *A.* 4.433–4: *tempus inane peto, requiem spatiumque furori | dum mea me uictam doceat fortuna dolere* ('I am only asking for empty time, an interval and space for my rage, until fortune shall teach me to grieve in my defeat'). In line 434, both the insertion of *fortuna* in the same metrical position of *Ann.* 260

<sup>120</sup> Skutsch (1985) 440; see also Elliott (2013) 130–1.

and the admittedly very slight assonance between *haud quaquam quemquam* and *dum mea me uictam* could bring to mind that passage of the *Annales* to which Virgil's Turnus alludes at 11.425–7. In addition, Dido's request of *tempus inane* has been convincingly connected by Schiesaro to Euripides' Medea's request to Creon for 'a little more time' (*Med.* 389 σμικρὸν χρόνον), which is indeed the 'one day' (*Med.* 340 μίαν ἡμέραν) that allows the tragedy to be put into action.<sup>121</sup> If we accept that Ennius' fragment was pronounced by Hannibal in a similar line of reasoning to that we find in Livy 30.30.19–21, then the *unus dies* lamented by Ennius' Hannibal – *una hora* by Livy's – and the μία ἡμέρα requested by Medea fuse into one in Dido's *tempus inane*, providing it with threatening connotations, especially in view of her subsequent lament over her bad use of time in her dealings with Aeneas. This lament resonates, as we have seen, with Hannibal's words to Scipio before Zama and the memory of his famous waste of time in failing to march on Rome after the battle of Cannae, when 'the delay of *that one day*' was considered to 'have saved the city and the empire' (Liv. 22.51.4 *mora eius diei satis creditur saluti fuisse urbi atque imperio*).<sup>122</sup>

#### 4.4.3 Dido and Sophoniba

A final parallel between *Aeneid* 4 and Livy Book 30 can be found in the tragic love story of Sophoniba and Masinissa, narrated by Livy at 30.12–15. Sophoniba (Punic \**Spnb'l* = 'Baal has pronounced judgement'), daughter of Hasdrubal Gisgonis (son of Gisgo), had been married to Syphax, king of the Masaesylii (western Numidia), in order to make him an ally of the Carthaginians. When Masinissa, king of the Massylii

<sup>121</sup> Schiesaro (2008) 64–71 especially 66: '*inane* conveys, with a different emphasis, the same reassurance implicit in Medea's insistence on μία, the single most important element of her exchange with Creon ... Dido's *inane* rather rings as an unrequested apology, almost a *Verneigung*: Medea's time has surely been anything but "empty". Is it reasonable to suspect that Dido's request, too, is fraught with similar dangers?'

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Liv. 30.20.7–8, where Hannibal curses himself for not marching on Rome after Cannae.

(eastern Numidia) and ally of the Romans, defeats Syphax and makes him Rome's prisoner, Sophoniba manages to seduce the commander, who marries her in a hurry in order to keep her from becoming Scipio's prisoner (Liv. 30.12). Scipio is informed of the wedding by the captured Syphax, whose jealous denunciation of the couple is combined with an apologetic recognition of Sophoniba as the demonic temptress who forced him into an alliance with the Carthaginians (Liv. 30.13). There follows Scipio's rebuke to Masinissa, which includes praise of the properly Roman virtues of *temperantia* and *continentia libidinum*, in which the Numidian king has just been found lacking (Liv. 30.14). Consequently, Masinissa asks permission to keep at least part of the promise that he has made to Sophoniba and provides her with poison in order to keep her from falling into Roman hands. Following Sophoniba's suicide, the episode closes with a description of Scipio's generous rewards to Masinissa and his admission into Rome's military world (Liv. 30.15).

Livy provides the fullest and most romanticised version of this story in our extant sources. Sophoniba is implicitly referred to but not mentioned in a passage of Polybius<sup>123</sup> and is the protagonist of a short paragraph of Diodorus Siculus (Diod. 27.7), who makes her Masinissa's wife both before and after her second marriage to Syphax.<sup>124</sup> Interestingly, Livy emphasises Sophoniba's irresistible seductiveness already in her marriage to Syphax (29.23.7, 30.7.8–9, 30.11.3);<sup>125</sup> this motif, together with the emphasis on luxury surrounding Sophoniba in her palace in Cirta<sup>126</sup> and with the affinities between Livy's description of her suicide (30.15.8 *non locuta*

<sup>123</sup> Pol. 14.2.4; Walbank (1967) 426 thinks it likely that the story was romanticised also in Polybius.

<sup>124</sup> Other sources include Appian *Pun.* 27–8, Dio 17.57.51, Zonaras 9.11–13. Silius only mentions her (*Pun.* 17.71). Klotz (1940–1) 194–5 and Walsh (1961) 132 believe that Livy's source was Coelius Antipater, on the basis of a fragment (F42 Cornell = 55 Hermann Schol. Vatic. ad Verg. Georg. 2.345 (Serv. III p. 249): *Coelius in septimo: consuetudine uxoris, indulgite liberum*) which Hermann (1979) 193 recognised as referring to Sophoniba. In Hermann's view, however, Coelius would have transmitted the version we find in Diodorus.

<sup>125</sup> See Kowalewski (2002) 219–21, Levene (2010) 255.

<sup>126</sup> Catin (1944) 83.

*est ferocius quam acceptum poculum nullo trepidationis signo dato impauidè hausit*, ‘she did not behave more fiercely in her speech than in accepting the cup and fearlessly drinking it up without any sign of wavering’) and Horace’s Cleopatra Ode (*Carm.* 1.37.29 *deliberata morte ferocior*, ‘made fiercer by her acceptance of death’),<sup>127</sup> betrays Sophoniba’s role as a double for Cleopatra<sup>128</sup> in a manner similar to Virgil’s Dido. Moreover, a number of thematic and verbal similarities exist between the stories of these two Carthaginian women in the respective versions of Virgil and Livy.

To start with, Masinissa meets Sophoniba at the threshold of her palace, as he is entering the *uestibulum* (Liv. 30.12.11 *intranti uestibulum in ipso limine Sophoniba, uxor Syphacis, filia Hasdrubalis Poeni, occurrit*, ‘as he was entering the forecourt, Sophoniba, the wife of Syphax, daughter of Hasdrubal the Carthaginian, came to meet him at the very threshold’); Sophoniba is ‘beautiful and her age in full bloom’ (30.12.17 *forma erat insignis et florentissima aetas*). Aeneas sees Dido at the threshold of Juno’s temple: she is ‘of surpassing beauty, and followed by a vast company of youth’ (*A.* 1.496–7 *regina ad templum, forma pulcherrima Dido, | incessit, magna iuuenum stipante caterua*). Livy’s scene also matches, more closely, the preliminaries to the hunt in *Aeneid* 4, which will lead to the union/wedding in the cave: there are Massylian horsemen preceding Dido (*A.* 4.132 *Massylique ruunt equites*) while ‘Punic princes await for her at the threshold of the palace as she is lingering in her chamber’ (4.133–4 *reginam thalamo cunctantem ad limina primi | Poenorum exspectant*).<sup>129</sup> The context in the *Aeneid* is military, as is that surrounding the wedding of Masinissa and Sophoniba: Masinissa arrives ‘in the midst of the column of armed men’ (Liv. 30.12.11 *in medio agmine armatorum*), just like Aeneas, whose first action is to unite his

<sup>127</sup> Toppani (1977–8) 574 n. 25, Haley (1989) 179.

<sup>128</sup> See Martin (1941–42) 124, Haley (1989) 178–81, Kowalewski (2002) 239, Levene (2010) 255 n. 228.

<sup>129</sup> One may wonder whether the participle *cunctantem* here may also recall the tactics of hesitation shared by Dido and Hannibal (see above, pp. 237–9), but also by Fabius (the *cunctator*) and Hannibal, see Elliott (2009).

armed men with Dido's (*A.* 4.142 *infert se socium Aeneas atque agmina iungit*, 'Aeneas marches as an ally, and joins his army to Dido's'). Livy emphasises Masinissa's haste, which urges him to celebrate 'a wedding in the middle of the arms' (30.12.19–20; 14.2 *raptae prope inter arma nuptiae*). The military context of the hunt which leads to Aeneas and Dido's 'wedding' in the cave is stressed by the mention of the Massylii and continues with the description of what seems like a Punic military horse (*A.* 4.135 *stat sonipes ac frena ferox spumantia mandit*, 'there stood her fierce horse, champing the foaming bit') before the union of Aeneas and Dido's armies is mentioned.

This military alliance works well with the already suggested interpretation of the *coniugium* as a military *foedus*, which is indeed the right interpretation for Sophoniba's weddings with both Syphax and Masinissa, whom she prays to let 'touch his right, victorious hand' in terms which are closely reminiscent of a treaty (30.12.12 *uictricem attingere dextra*). In her supplication to Masinissa, Sophoniba mentions more than once her condition as 'captive' (30.12.12 *captivae* ... 12.14 *captiva tua*), a condition which is also shared by Dido at least since the deer simile (*A.* 4.68–73), which emphasises her status as prey. In her own supplications to Aeneas, Dido reminds him of such status more than once, both in relation to him (4.330 *capta ac deserta*, 'conquered and abandoned') and to other possible husbands, such as the Gaetulian Iarbas (4.326 ... *aut captam ducat Gaetulius Iarbas?*, 'or shall Gaetulian Iarbas drag me off in chains?').

In the *Aeneid* and the *Ab Vrbe Condita*, the structure of the events is exactly the same, with Iarbas and Syphax, and Mercury and Scipio, playing an analogous role. After Sophoniba and Masinissa's wedding, Syphax's complaints to Scipio (Liv. 30.13) trigger Scipio's rebuke to Masinissa (30.14) and thus, ultimately, Sophoniba's suicide (30.15). In the same way, after Dido and Aeneas' *coniugium*, Iarbas' complaints to Jupiter (4.206–18) provoke Mercury's flight and rebuke to Aeneas (4.265–76) and thus, ultimately, Dido's suicide.

In addition, there are other slight but telling similarities between the two stories: both Iarbas and Syphax emphasise

the lustful and inappropriate behaviour of their rival (Liv. 30.13.14 *neque prudentiorem neque constantiorem Masinissam quam Syphacem esse, etiam iuuenta incautiorem; certe stultius illum atque intemperantius eam quam se duxisse*, ‘Masinissa was neither wiser nor more steadfast than Syphax, on the contrary he was even more inconsiderate owing to his youth; certainly he had behaved in a more foolish and debauched way than Syphax when he married her’; cf. *A.* 4.215–17 *et nunc ille Paris cum semiuiro comitatu, | Maeonia mentum mitra crinemque madentem | subnexus, rapto potitur*, ‘and now that Paris, with a company of half-men and his chin and dripping hair tied by a Maeonian mitre, is enjoying his theft’), appealing to the lack of the Roman moral virtues of *continentia* and *temperantia* which would have been expected in both Aeneas and Masinissa by their interlocutors, Jupiter and Scipio. Both Dido and Sophoniba have the power to make their lovers forgetful of their duties (Syphax at Liv. 30.13.11 *tum hospitia priuata et publica foedera omnia ex animo eiecisse, cum Carthaginiensem matronam domum acceperit*, ‘then all private guest-friendships and all public treaties were erased from his head, when he took a Carthaginian matron to his house’; Mercury rebuking Aeneas at *A.* 4.267 *heu! regni rerumque oblite tuarum!*, ‘Alas! Forgetful of your kingdom and your destiny!’). Both are represented as Erinyes, Dido in her own curse and Sophoniba in Syphax’s words, which cast her as a ‘Fury’ and ‘Plague’ (30.13.12 *illam furiam pestemque ... 13.13 eandem pestem ac furiam*) that ‘set fire to his palace with her nuptial torches’ (30.13.12 *illis nuptialibus facibus regiam conflagrasse suam*).<sup>130</sup> Similarly, Dido’s wedding, during which ‘fires flashed’ in the sky (*A.* 4.167 *fulsere ignes*), is specified as ‘the first day of death and the first cause of calamity’ (4.169–70 *ille dies primus leti primusque malorum | causa fuit*), which would eventually result in setting fire to her palace, as Aeneas safely sees from his ship (5.3–4 *moenia respiciens, quae ... conlucent flammis*, ‘looking back at those walls, already resplendent with flames’). Moreover, both husbands,

<sup>130</sup> See Kowalewski (2002) 221–3; on Sophoniba as ‘le type même de la femme fatale à l’action dévastatrice et tragique’ see Johner (1996) 86–8.

Masinissa and Aeneas, fail to keep their nuptial promise, and yet their wives avoid falling into someone else's hands, Iarbas' or Scipio's. Masinissa's poison is specified by Sophoniba as a 'wedding gift' (30.15.7 *nuptiale munus*), in much the same way as Aeneas' sword is for Dido, at least in Silius' reading (*Pun.* 8.53 *donum exitiale mariti*, 'the deadly gift of her husband').

In sum, there are a number of clear similarities between the two episodes of these Carthaginian women, similarities that have been explained by the hypothesis that both women reflect the contemporary figure of Cleopatra,<sup>131</sup> but that could also point to a more direct connection between the two episodes, either in the form of a dialogue between Virgil and Livy, or in the recognition of a common lost source, perhaps an episode of Ennius' *Annales*.

The Italian Renaissance shows clear appreciation of the similarities between Dido and Sophoniba: in Book 5 of his *Africa*, Petrarch rewrites his own Dido behind the character of Sophoniba, by creating an hexametrical version of Livy 30.12–15 in terms closely akin to *Aeneid* 4.<sup>132</sup> Given Silius Italicus' interest in linking the *Aeneid* and the third decade, it comes as a surprise that he missed the opportunity to blend the stories of Dido and Sophoniba (the latter being mentioned only once in the *Punica*, and not even by name, *Pun.* 17.71–5) and that we have to wait until Petrarch, a poet as well as a philologist, for the connection to be picked up. While Petrarch the poet cleverly combines two stories which have an obvious potential for literary dialogue, Petrarch the philologist may be seen to shed light on the likely importance of the character of Sophoniba for Virgil's construction of his Dido. Moreover, Andrea Mantegna – though painting some time later and under clear Petrarchan influence – seems to have assimilated the two women in the series of four 'fake bronze' paintings in tempera on panel which have been identified as representations of Dido, Judith, Tuccia and Sophoniba.<sup>133</sup> The association

<sup>131</sup> Haley (1989).

<sup>132</sup> See Bartuschat (2000), Hardie (2012) 471–4, Whittington (2016) 97–106.

<sup>133</sup> The identification with Sophoniba is uncertain; it has been suggested that the panel represents instead Artemisia, sister and wife of Mausolus. On Mantegna's Dido, see Franklin (2000).



between the two women seems to reach the eighteenth century, as perhaps attested by the clear similarities between Gianbattista Tiepolo's frescoes representing the deaths of Dido and Sophoniba respectively.<sup>134</sup>

It may not be too far-fetched a suggestion that the story of Sophoniba and Masinissa was present in Ennius' *Annales*, since already De Sanctis indicated Ennius as the most likely source for its poetic romanticisation.<sup>135</sup> A fragment of Ennius referring to specific banquet lamps, the *lychni* (311 Sk. *lychnorum lumina bis sex*, 'twelve lamps'), preserved by Macrobius because of its relation to Dido's banquet at *A.* 1.726 (*dependent lychni laquearibus aureis*, 'the lamps hung from the gold-coffered ceilings'), was thought by Pascoli to refer to the wedding feast of Masinissa and Sophoniba.<sup>136</sup> If it is plausible to think that Ennius was Livy's source for the Sophoniba story, then the whole Virgilian episode of Aeneas and Dido would also be resonant of the Ennian tragedy of Sophoniba mingled with the more contemporary echoes of Cleopatra. This would provide an interesting explanation for the friendly presence of the Massylii preceding Dido in the hunt (*A.* 4.132), and again for her further connection to the Massylian *sacerdos* (4.483). In addition, at the beginning of *Aeneid* 6, Aeneas will claim that in his visit to Carthage he entered the territory of 'Massylian people' (*A.* 6.60 *Massylum gentis*). The friendliness or military alliance of the Massylii with Dido appears even more striking when contrasted with the role of the Gaetulians and Numidians, who are specified as enemies from the very beginning of Book 4 (*A.* 4.40–1 *hinc Gaetulae urbes, genus insuperabile bello, | et Numidae infreni cingunt et inhospita Syrtis*, 'on

<sup>134</sup> See Tiepolo's 'Death of Dido', now in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Art, Moscow, and Tiepolo's 'Death of Sophonisba', now in the Museum Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid. Cf. also Tiepolo's drawings for the 'Death of Sophonisba', with Reade (1939). Sophoniba's story was part of the cycle of Scipio, painted by Tiepolo in 1731–2 in Palazzo Dugnani, Milan. The Story of Aeneas and Dido was painted in the Villa Valmarana, in the outskirts of Vicenza, from 1757 onwards. On Tiepolo's Dido, see Broude (2009).

<sup>135</sup> De Sanctis (1917) 532 n. 137. See also Walbank (1967) 426 and *contra* Haley (1990) 375 n. 2.

<sup>136</sup> Referred to by Skutsch (1985) 488; I was unable to find Pascoli's direct reference.



the one side we are surrounded by the cities of the Gaetulians, a race invincible in war, and the Numidians, unbridled, and the inhospitable Syrtēs').

To conclude, while it is safe to say that the meeting between Aeneas and Dido was included in Naevius' *Bellum Punicum*, though perhaps with no mention of the love story,<sup>137</sup> the episode of Sophoniba and Masinissa as narrated by Ennius in the *Annales* may have provided Virgil with a suitable model for his own 'daring invention'<sup>138</sup> of the Aeneas and Dido story, indeed made of *facta atque infecta* (*A.* 4.190). Virgil may have 'invented' a new story out of a conflation of old ones similar to that displayed in Petrarch's *Africa* – alongside a thick amalgamation of Greek mythical and Roman historical models, from Medea to Pentheus, from Cleopatra to Hannibal.

#### 4.5 The Capture of Carthage and Rome's Eternal Triumph

Now that we have detected hints of both First and Second Punic Wars in *Aeneid* 1 and 4, it remains to be seen how the death of Dido in the close of the episode is – explicitly – reminiscent of the final destruction of Carthage at the end of the third conflict. In this case, the task appears relatively easy, since Virgil himself establishes the connection:

lamentis gemituque et femineo ululatu  
tecta fremunt, resonat magnis plangoribus aether,  
non aliter quam si immissis ruat hostibus omnis  
Karthago aut antiqua Tyros, flammaeque furentes  
culmina perque hominum uoluantur perque deorum.

(*A.* 4.667–71)

The palace shivers with lamentation, sobbing, and womanly howling, and the sky echoes back the loud sound of mourning. It

<sup>137</sup> As suggested to me by Alessandro Barchiesi, who mentioned the possibility that Ilioneus' mention of the Tyrians pushing off the Trojans from their shores (*A.* 1.539–41) may be an allusion to Naevius' original version of the *aition*. Cf. A. Barchiesi (1999) 132 n. 10 = 186.

<sup>138</sup> Hardie (2012) 110.

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was as though the enemy had broken into the gates, and the whole of Carthage, or ancient Tyre, were collapsing, with raging flames rolling over the roofs of men, over the roofs of the gods.

This explicit reference to the grand finale of the Punic Wars plays a vital role when we come to assess the plausibility of the less obvious reminders of the first and second conflicts which I have so far proposed to detect in this chapter. Yet even in this passage there is more than meets the eye. Apart from the simile's acquiring a different meaning when read as point of arrival and confirmation of an allegorised journey through Republican history within the *Aeneid's* epic, not only does the passage point to Dido's (Aeneas-like) synecdochic role in embodying her whole *ciuitas*, it also establishes a network of connections with specific episodes of the wars, and their reverberations between the *Aeneid* and Livy's third decade, which contains more than one hint at the ultimate destruction of the city, especially, as we will see, in the episode of the siege of Saguntum.

Alongside the recognition of allusions to specific historical episodes, the passage also merits close attention because it marks the end of a section of the poem (Books 1–4) that expressed its concern with the past through the theme of the *urbs capta*, and the beginning of a new, forward-looking section (Books 5–8) that will instead proceed towards the foundation of that city that the *Aeneid* itself contributes to label the *urbs aeterna*. This contrast between Carthage and Rome as a city naturally bound to perish *vs.* the only one that is destined to stay (*urbs capta vs. urbs aeterna*), a contrast made all the more significant by the fact that Carthage's status of *capta* is encapsulated and postponed to a 'future in the past', looks back in ring composition to the beginning of the section, i.e. the beginning of the *Aeneid*: there, Rome was envisaged as the future and telos of both epic and history (*A.* 1.5 *dum conderet Urbem*, 'until he would found the City'), with the abandonment of Troy oppositionally opening both epic and history (*A.* 1.1 *Troiae ... ab oris*, 'from the shores of Troy'). Carthage, even though not yet properly founded, is already part of the past in her first appearance, which casts her on the same side as Troy

and Tyre: the opening sentence *urbs antiqua fuit*, 'there was an ancient city' (1.12), as has been argued, connects her directly to Troy,<sup>139</sup> while the mention of the *Tyrii coloni* brings into play Carthage's mother town, another *urbs capta* – and one with an excruciating future in the past, given her destruction at the hands of Alexander. The death of Dido *qua* the ultimate destruction of Carthage seems to recast in a tragic ending the same cities present at the beginning of the *Aeneid*: the imagined destructions of Carthage and Tyre are both implicitly linked to the fall of Troy, the *urbs capta* par excellence (as at 2.507 *urbis ... captae*),<sup>140</sup> and the simile is in privileged dialogue not only with *Aeneid* 2,<sup>141</sup> but also with the Trojan scenes depicted on the frieze of Juno's Carthaginian temple in Book 1.

This contrast between Carthage and Rome in terms of mortality *vs.* immortality, finite *vs.* infinite, limited *vs.* boundless power is reflected in Carthage's gradual and ineluctable appropriation of the Trojan paradigm at the expense of the Aeneadae, whose journey towards the site of Rome is also the opportunity, as Juno will eventually make explicit, to shake off completely the burden of their Trojan identity, with all that it entails.<sup>142</sup> Interestingly enough, this is another major thematic point of contact between Virgil and Livy. Firstly, they both share certain tragic features which may be paralleled in several ancient historians, perhaps including Asinius Pollio,<sup>143</sup> even if we must reject Heinze's outdated notion of a 'tragic' or 'Peripatetic' school of history.<sup>144</sup> Most importantly, they both

<sup>139</sup> See pp. 99–100.

<sup>140</sup> 'A manifest allusion to the *topos*', according to Rossi (2004a) 28.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. *A.* 2.486–8 *at domus interior gemitu miseroque tumultu | miscetur, penitusque cauae plangoribus aedes | femineis ululant; ferit aurea sidera clamor*, 'but inside the house all was confusion, moanings and wretched commotion, and the inmost hollow chambers were howling with the wailing of women; their cries rose to strike the golden stars'. Another *urba capta* to add to the *topos* is Alba Longa in Ennius' *Annales*: see especially Keith (2016).

<sup>142</sup> See Schmitz (2013) 100–2.

<sup>143</sup> As it would appear from Horace's *Ode* 2.1, although Pollio's engagement with tragic history is far from certain: see Introduction, p. 6.

<sup>144</sup> Heinze (1993) 271–3; cf. Witte (1910). The term 'tragic history' was coined in the 1890s by Eduard Schwartz, but the whole topic is extremely controversial, and scholars now tend to reject the notion of a 'school' in favour of a more cautious recognition of tragic tropes which were used by different historians: see Ullman (1942), Walbank (1955), (1960), (1972) 34–40, Brink (1960), Mazza (1966) 43

seem to create an opposition between Rome and Carthage, which is based on their parallel ratification and enhancement of the new Augustan myth of *Roma aeterna*, in stark contrast with their historiographical or epic predecessors. Both Virgil and Livy – who, together with Tibullus (2.5.23), are the first two authors to participate in the Augustan creation of a statement of faith which was already latent at the end of the Republic<sup>145</sup> but destined to become a long-lasting belief only from Virgil's *imperium sine fine* (*A.* 1.279) onwards<sup>146</sup> – present the myth of *Roma aeterna* in striking opposition to the Polybian (and perhaps Ennian) evolutionary model of ἀνακύκλωσις, which theorises the inevitable decline and fall of *any* state. In addition, both Virgil and Livy apply the Polybian model (and the most illustrious paradigm that comes with it, the fall of Troy) to the arch-enemy of the Republic, the city that would be the perfect mirror image of Rome were it not for one essential difference: while Carthage has succumbed to and inside History, Rome has managed to elevate herself above it.

#### 4.5.1 Polybius' Anakyklosis

Before discussing Virgil's and Livy's treatments of the matter, it is necessary to turn to those predecessors who would never have subscribed to the concept of an eternal city. Among these, Polybius stands out as the imperative starting point, especially for a history concerned with Carthage. I have already touched on the fact that both Virgil and Livy tackle the topos of the *urbs capta* with what appears like a genuinely tragic focus, perhaps directly or indirectly inherited from the 'tragic'

n. 14, Fornara (1983) 120–34, Rutherford (2007). See Walsh (1961) 29, 41 and Mader (1993) on the influence of tragic tropes on Livy's lost sources, such as Fabius Pictor, Coelius Antipater, Valerius Antias. On tragic history in Sallust, see Perrochat (1949) 40–5 and Dué (2000).

<sup>145</sup> See Cic. *Rep.* 3.33 *debet enim constituta esse ciuitas, ut aeterna sit. itaque nullus interitus est rei publicae naturalis*, 'for the state ought to be founded so firmly that it shall be eternal. Hence death is not natural for a state'; *Marc.* 22 *doleoque, cum res publica immortalis esse debeat, eam in unius mortalis anima consistere*, 'I mourn that, while the state ought to be immortal, its existence rests on the life of a mortal man'; cf. Cic. *Phil.* 2.51.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Livy 4.4.4, 5.7.10, 6.23.7; See Ogilvie (1965) 536 and Pratt (1965).

historiographers, and I think it is no coincidence that Polybius' ἀνακύκλωσις has been seen to display affinities with the tragic reflections on the transience of human condition which are frequently epitomised by the inevitable pattern of rise and fall of cities.<sup>147</sup>

In fact, notwithstanding Polybius' famous rejection of tragic historiography at 2.56.11–12 (a passage which is one of the prime sources for the hypothesis that such a school ever existed), the preface of his *Histories* (Pol. 1.1.2) appears imbued with Aristotelian terms and tragic conceptions, when history, far from being merely Cicero's *magistra uitae* (and, in particular, *magistra* of political life), seems to challenge and surpass tragedy in the 'vividness' (ἐναργεστάτην) through which it presents 'the vicissitudes of others' (ἀλλοτρίων περιπέτειαι) in order to teach how 'to bear' (ὑποφέρειν) the 'reversals of fortune' (τὰς τῆς τύχης μεταβολὰς) 'nobly' (γενναίως). Famously, ἐνάργεια, περιπέτεια and μεταβολή are all technical terms in Aristotle's analysis of tragedy in the *Poetics*, and the moral aim of tragedy lies precisely in the staging of noble characters to be emulated in their eventual acceptance of unbearable sufferings. At 1.1.4, in apparent contrast with his critique of those historians whose aim is 'to thrill and charm' the readers (2.56.11 ἐκπληξαι καὶ ψυχαγωγῆσαι), instead of 'instructing and persuading' them (διδάξαι καὶ πείσαι), Polybius even grants the παράδοξον τῶν πράξεων ('the unexpectedness of the events') a conspicuous part in his *Histories*, in order to 'challenge and incite everyone' (προκαλέσασθαι καὶ παρορμῆσαι πάντα). Most importantly – in what has been seen by many as an obvious contradiction of his scientific historical method<sup>148</sup> – Polybius' *Histories* devote a particularly relevant role to Fortune and its reversals:<sup>149</sup> a surprising fact, considering that the whimsical

<sup>147</sup> See de Romilly (1977) 1–19 and Hartog (2010), but *contra* Rutherford (2007). Cf. Labate (1991).

<sup>148</sup> And therefore often considered a mere verbal convention rather than a religious belief; see Walsh (1961) 129–30.

<sup>149</sup> See Walbank (1957) 6–26, (1972) 39, 68, 157 and (2007); Hau (2011) with further bibliography. Possibly Polybius was influenced by Demetrius of Phalerum's lost treatise *On Fortune*; see Walbank (1972) 2–3, 26–7.

but cyclical role of *Fortuna/Tyche* in directing the lives of both individuals and their communities has been recognised as the fundamental principle of those 'tragic' historians such as Duris or Phylarchus so utterly despised by Polybius, and it has also been suggested that Chance held in their histories a role comparable to the *deus ex machina* of tragedy.<sup>150</sup>

It may be that historians like Phylarchus went too far in abusing the role of the instability of fortune as the sole explanation for historical events, but perhaps what Polybius actually rejects about their works, leaving aside the abuse of 'tragic' stylistic modalities, is rather the closed-mindedness and limited ambition of their aims which is reflected by the monograph form, in itself an obstacle to the understanding of cyclical historical patterns, since it does not allow one to put events into perspective and appreciate the chain of causes and effects (Pol. 1.4, 3.32; cf. 29.12.2–4).<sup>151</sup> It is this despicable baseness of aims and ideals which pushes these historians to rely more on the pleasurable side (τὸ τερπνόν) of historical narration rather than on the profitable (τὸ χρήσιμον). This is not to say that τὸ τερπνόν should not at all exist alongside τὸ χρήσιμον,<sup>152</sup> but rather that 'the scale comes down very sharply on the side of profit'.<sup>153</sup> As Walbank puts it, this sensational style of presentation 'was so deeply rooted a feature of historical writing in the Hellenistic period that Polybius allows it to influence his own presentation to a greater degree than his professions would suggest'<sup>154</sup> or, to see it differently, Polybius might be exploiting those very same tragic modes of Hellenistic history in order to challenge and overcome them, a sort of *imitatio cum aemulatione* which also takes into consideration, as Cicero will do in his epistle to Lucceius, the importance of pleasure for the reader and the connections between the *delectatio lectoris* ('the amusement of

<sup>150</sup> See Fornara (1983) 126–7; cf. Hartog (2010) 36: 'how does Fortune act? Like a tragic playwright.'

<sup>151</sup> See Walbank (1957) 11. On the close link between monographs (in particular, biographies) and tragic history, see Dué (2000) and Rutherford (2007) 507.

<sup>152</sup> Or ὠφέλιμα, in Thucydides' terms (1.22.4).

<sup>153</sup> Walbank (1957) 7.

<sup>154</sup> Walbank (1957) 14.

the reader') and the *temporum uarietates fortunaequē uicissitudines*, 'changes of circumstance and vicissitudes of fortune' (Cic. *Ad. Fam.* 5.12.4). Polybius knows that each historian is in 'the awkward position of serving two masters, what we call art and science',<sup>155</sup> thus the need to serve his medicine in a honey-sweetened cup.

But Tragedy for Polybius is not merely an embellishment that the historian can add to or delete from the narration at one's discretion: rather, it emerges from the picture as History's main object of emulation and opposition. These are the two rivals in a competition of universal teaching, both *magistrae uitae* that aim at instructing their readers/audience in predicting and therefore bearing the calamities of life by means of the 'vividness' (ἐνάργεια) with which they stage historical or mythical *exempla*. The main difference lies, according to Aristotle (1451b), in the fact that while history relates 'events which did happen' (τὰ γενόμενα), tragedy deals with 'those which might happen' (οἷα ἂν γένοιτο), according to probability or necessity.<sup>156</sup> A further point of contrast, expressed in a highly controversial passage (1459a), seems to be that whereas poetry and tragedy aim at constructing a story plot 'around a single action, whole and complete in itself' (περὶ μίαν πράξιν ὅλην καὶ τελείαν), ἱστορίαι require an exposition 'not of a single piece in action, but of a single period of time' (οὐχὶ μιᾷ πράξεως ... ἀλλ' ἐνὸς χρόνου) and show events 'each related to the others accidentally' (ὥν ἕκαστον ὡς ἔτυχεν ἔχει πρὸς ἄλληλα), thus 'important in themselves but intrinsically unrelated'.<sup>157</sup> Polybius therefore overcomes the Aristotelian objections to history when he explicitly claims that the most essential part of history lies in the clear nexus of cause-and-effect relationships displayed by a genuinely historical enquiry (3.32.6 ἀκμὴν γὰρ φάμεν ἀναγκαιότατα μέρη τῆς ἱστορίας εἶναι τὰ ἐπιγινόμενα

<sup>155</sup> Cf. Fornara (1983) 99.

<sup>156</sup> See Brink (1960).

<sup>157</sup> Fornara (1983) 96. If so, the meaning of ἱστορίαι in this passage should be something more similar to Hayden White's 'chronicles', rather than to actual historical accounts: in 'chronicles' 'an event is simply "there" as an element of a series; it does not "function" as a story element': see White (1973) 7.

τοῖς ἔργοις καὶ τὰ παρεπόμενα καὶ μάλιστα τὰ περὶ τὰς αἰτίας, 'for I maintain that by far the most essential part of history is the consideration of the consequences of events, their concomitant circumstances and especially their causes'); in this way, he can regard apparently unrelated events 'however many and various their character, as all tending to the same purpose' (3.32.7 πολλὰς καὶ ποικίλας ἐσχηκότα διαθέσεις, πάσας δὲ συννευούσας πρὸς τὴν αὐτὴν ὑπόθεσιν). It is precisely this kind of historical enquiry that allows the historian to develop general theories such as those exposed in Book 6, and therefore even to foretell and predict future events (12.25b.3 ἐκ γὰρ τῶν ὁμοίων ἐπὶ τοὺς οἰκείους μεταφερομένων καιροὺς ἀφορμαὶ γίνονται καὶ προλήψεις εἰς τὸ προῖδέσθαι τὸ μέλλον, 'for it is the mental transference of similar circumstances to our own times that gives us the means of forming presentiments of what is about to happen'; cf. 3.31.12, 30.6.4). From this point of view, history comes out as the winner of the contest, since its close analysis of τὰ γενόμενα also inevitably includes a 'tragic' foreknowledge of οἷα ἂν γένοιτο.<sup>158</sup>

This brief introduction to tragedy in Polybius was essential in order to appreciate the tragic overtones of his theory of *anakyklosis*, famously expounded in *Histories* 6. His intention to treat 'the how, when and wherefore' of the Roman rule over the *oikoumene* (Pol. 3.1.4 τοῦ πῶς καὶ πότε καὶ διὰ τί πάντα τὰ γνωριζόμενα μέρη τῆς οἰκουμένης ὑπὸ τὴν Ῥωμαίων δυναστείαν ἐγένετο) is interwoven with the 'self-evident' notion that 'all existing things are subject to decay and change' (6.57.1 Ὅτι μὲν οὖν πᾶσι τοῖς οὕσιν ὑπόκειται φθορὰ καὶ μεταβολὴ σχεδὸν οὐ

<sup>158</sup> The same notion that a genuinely historical survey allows one to 'have a clear view both of the events which have happened and of those which will some day' was expressed by Thucydides, together with the caveat that the dismissal of the μυθῶδες from his narrative would make the work 'less pleasing' (1.22.4 καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ἴσως τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες αὐτῶν ἀτερπέστερον φανεῖται· ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀκροῦντως ἔξει, 'and it may well be that the absence of the fabulous from my narrative will seem less pleasing to the ear; but whoever shall wish to have a clear view both of the events which have happened and of those which will some day, in all human probability, happen again in the same or a similar way – for these to adjudge my history profitable will be enough for me'). See Flory (1990).



προσδεῖ λόγων), and Rome and Carthage are by no means an exception. The reason why the Carthaginians have been overthrown in war is that ‘by as much as the power and prosperity of Carthage had been earlier than that of Rome, by so much had Carthage already begun to decline; while Rome was exactly at her prime’ (6.51.5 καθ’ ὅσον γὰρ ἡ Καρχηδονίων πρότερον ἴσχυε καὶ πρότερον εὐτύχει τῆς Ῥωμαίων, κατὰ τοσοῦτον ἢ μὲν Καρχηδὼν ἤδη τότε παρήκμαζεν, ἢ δὲ Ῥώμη μάλιστα τότε εἶχε τὴν ἀκμὴν). Yet a very similar future seems to attend Rome as well, especially in connection with the disappearance of her military rival, as the so-called ‘Sallust’s Theorem’ would have it. This future deserves not only an historical reflection (such as at 6.57), but a genuinely epic/tragic ending towards what textual transmission forces us to acknowledge as the close of Polybius’ *Histories*.<sup>159</sup>

In Book 38, when the destruction of Carthage is almost completed, Scipio famously looks back to the beginnings of Polybius’ historical project and demonstrates that he has fully understood his teacher’s lesson:

καὶ ἐπιστρέψας ἐξ αὐτῆς καὶ λαβόμενός μου τῆς δεξιᾶς, “ὦ Πολύβιε,” ἔφη “καλὸν μὲν, ἀλλ’ οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως ἐγὼ δέδια καὶ προορῶμαι μὴ ποτέ τις ἄλλος τοῦτο τὸ παράγγελμα δώσει περὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας πατρίδος” ταύτης δὲ πραγματικωτέραν καὶ νουνεχέστεραν οὐ ῥάδιον εἰπεῖν τὸ γὰρ < ἐν > τοῖς μεγίστοις κατορθώμασι καὶ ταῖς τῶν ἐχθρῶν συμφοραῖς ἔννοιαν λαμβάνειν τῶν οἰκείων πραγμάτων καὶ τῆς ἐναντίας περιστάσεως καὶ καθόλου πρόχειρον ἔχειν ἐν ταῖς ἐπιτυχίαις τὴν τῆς τύχης ἐπισφάλειαν ἀνδρός ἐστὶ μεγάλου καὶ τελείου καὶ συλλήβδην ἀξίου μνήμης.

(Pol. 38.21)

Turning round to me at once and grasping my hand, “Oh, Polybius,” he said, “It is a beautiful sight; and yet I don’t know how, but I have a dread foreboding that some day someone else will give the same order against my own city.” It

<sup>159</sup> It is my contention that this paragraph serves as a ring-compositional close to a narrative sprung from the 140th Olympiad (Pol. 1.3.1), even though it comes to the Hannibalic War only in Book 3. There is a paradox here between the open-endedness inherent in what proclaims to be an ‘universal history’ and the sense that Polybius’ cyclical view of history implies that the telos of his project on Roman ecumenic domain must be the end of Rome itself. On the open-endedness of Livy’s project cf. Henderson (1989) 76: ‘Mustn’t Livy’s *History* be troped on the “organicist fallacy” – the Urbs’ Birth, Efflorescence, Decline (in short, the *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*) a sort of its writer’s “life”?’

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would be difficult to mention an utterance more statesmanlike and more profound. For at the moment of our greatest success and of our enemies' disaster to reflect on our own situation and on the possible reversal of circumstances, and generally to bear in mind at the season of success the mutability of Fortune, is something worthy of a great and perfect man, a man in short worthy to be remembered.

Scipio's overwhelming emotions at the sight of Carthage in flames, whether or not he also wept openly for the enemies in Polybius' account (cf. Appian *Pun.* 132 λέγεται μὲν δακρῦσαι καὶ φανερὸς γενέσθαι κλαίων ὑπὲρ πολέμιων, '[Scipio] is said to have shed tears and publicly lamented the fortune of the enemy', and Diod. 32.24 ὁ Σκιπίων ἀπροσποιήτως ἐδάκρυεν, 'Scipio cried unabashedly') are vividly depicted in the description of his gestures, when he turns to look at Polybius and shakes his hand as in recognition of his teachings. Since the five preceding lines of the text are hopelessly corrupt, it is difficult to ascertain whether Scipio's brief statement is a response to something said by Polybius<sup>160</sup> or simply to the sight of Carthage in flames; whatever it is that he finds beautiful (καλόν), one can notice the recognition of a purely aesthetic pleasure alongside the 'fear and foreboding' (δέδια καὶ προορῶμαι) aroused by a spectacle which is the result of an 'order', but in itself also a 'message' and a 'precept' (παράγγελμα). It is difficult here not to recall those Aristotelian concepts of pity and fear which have found so much favour in the reception of the *Poetics* (1452b). To a certain extent, Scipio's utterance can also be broadly compared with the third Stasimon of the *Agamemnon* (975–1034), a recognisably highly metatheatrical passage, which opens with the chorus' wondering about the nature of a certain 'fear' (976 δέϊμα) flying in front of its 'prophetic' heart (977 τερασκόπου) and of an unrequested 'presaging song' (979 μαντιπολεῖ δ' ... αἰοιδά) and further touches on the dangers of prosperity (1001–17) and on the possibility of a reversal of fortune for a 'destiny which goes straight forward' (1005 πότμος εὐθυπορῶν; cf. Polybius' κατορθώμασι). In

<sup>160</sup> Perhaps those lines contained some reference to Homer, though both Appian and Diodorus attribute the Homeric quotation to Scipio himself. See Walbank (1979) 722–4.

addition to this, Appian (*Pun.* 132) and Diodorus (32.24), possibly deriving from the lost passage of Polybius, both report Scipio quoting *Il.* 6.448–9 (ἔσσεται ἡμαρ ὅταν ποτ' ὀλώλη Ἴλιος ἱρή | καὶ Πριάμος καὶ λαὸς ἐνυμελίω Πριάμοιο, 'the day will come when sacred Ilium shall perish, and Priam and his people shall be slain') in a reflection on Priam's Troy as the paradigm *par excellence* of Fortune's reversals, as typically referred to by the tragedians. In Appian's account, Scipio's connections between Troy, the Assyrian empire, Media, Persia, Macedonia, Carthage and Rome (*Pun.* 132 μὲν Ἴλιον, εὐτυχὴς ποτε πόλις ... δὲ ἡ Ἀσσυρίων καὶ Μήδων καὶ Περσῶν ... ἀρχὴ μεγίστη ...) portray the Roman general as a good reader of history who has suddenly appreciated that, in becoming the author of 'great and memorable deeds' (Hdt. 1.1 ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, echoed by Polybius' 'grand and striking spectacle', *Pol.* 1.2 παράδοξον καὶ μέγα ... θεώρημα), he has been turned into one of history's main characters.<sup>161</sup> Therefore, one can see Scipio performing his role accordingly: perhaps with a reminiscence of Xerxes' 'weeping at the top of his happiness ... when he saw the whole Hellespont hidden by his ships' (Hdt. 7.45 Ὡς δὲ ὥρα πάντα μὲν τὸν Ἑλλήσποντον ὑπὸ τῶν νεῶν ἀποκεκρυμμένον ... ἐνθαῦτα ὁ Ξέρξης ἐωυτὸν ἐμακάρισε, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἐδάκρυσε) and considered 'the shortness of human life' (Hdt. 7.46 ὥς βραχὺς εἴη ὁ πᾶς ἀνθρώπινος βίος), Scipio acknowledges the reversals and repetitions of history, within a *Kreuzung der Gattungen* between epic, tragedy and historiography as regarding the ἀνθρώπεια (App. 132), the 'fate of all things human'.

#### 4.5.2 Pythagoras' Anakyklosis

The reflections of Appian's Scipio on the rise and fall of previously flourishing cities and empires look back to the beginning of the *Histories*, where Polybius calls to mind Herodotus' statement that 'many states that were once great have now

<sup>161</sup> For the ancients' definition of history as 'the memorable deeds of men', see Fornara (1983) 91–8.

become small: and those that were great in my time were small formerly' (Hdt. 1.5.3–4 τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ σμικρὰ αὐτῶν γέγονε τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμεῦ ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά) when he adds, at 1.2, that the 'spectacle' (θεώρημα) with which his *Histories* are concerned will look even more clearly 'striking and grand' (παράδοξον καὶ μέγα) if one compares the Roman dominion with those of the past, namely the Persian, the Spartan and the Macedonian (1.2.2–5). By doing so, while it will appear clear that the Romans have achieved a dominion of insurpassable dimension (1.2.7), the inevitability of their future fall is also implicitly inscribed in these historical successions of power.

Both Scipio Aemilianus' and Polybius' reflections closely resemble the words of Ovid's Pythagoras, when he takes off from the ruins of Troy (*Met.* 15.424–5 *nunc humilis ueteres tantummodo Troia ruinas ... ostendit*, 'now Troy is so low that she only shows her ancient ruins'), touches on the rise and decay of Sparta, Mycenae, Athens and Thebes (15.426–30),<sup>162</sup> and eventually lands on the birth of the city of Rome, whose specification as *Dardania* (15.481 *nunc quoque Dardanium fama est consurgere Romam*, 'and now they say that Dardanian Rome is also rising'), together with the explicit prediction of her future change of form (15.434 *haec igitur formam crescendo mutat*, 'by growing, she changes her shape'), may be taken as indirect hints at the inevitable decline and fall of every city and therefore as a motion of disbelief in the Augustan myth of eternal Rome.<sup>163</sup>

With exquisite irony, given Lucretius' famous rejection of Pythagoras' metempsychosis, Ovid's Pythagoras expresses his doctrine of metempsychosis as a Lucretian reader,<sup>164</sup> emphasising its similarities to Lucretius' reflections on the inevitable death of the world. According to Pythagoras' speech, 'nothing perishes in the whole universe' (*Met.* 15.254 *nec perit in toto*

<sup>162</sup> Although these lines, in view of their repetitions, have been suspected by Heinsius to be an interpolation.

<sup>163</sup> But see below, p. 267 for the possibility that the phoenix (*Met.* 15.391–407) singles out Rome as an exception, and cf. also Gildenhard-Zissos (2004) 69–71.

<sup>164</sup> See Hardie (1995).

*quicquam ... mundo*), a statement which would initially seem to contradict Lucretius' view that the elements in the world are of a mortal nature, and thus the world itself, both heaven and earth, is destined to perish (Lucr. 5.235–415). However, to argue for the immortality of everything is but another way to show that everything, at least from a human perspective, dies *de facto*, as it must necessarily 'vary and renew its aspect' (*Met.* 15.255 *sed uariat faciemque nouat*). Thus, as time passes by, 'we see some nations putting on new strength and others falling into weakness' (*Met.* 15.420–2 *sic tempora uerti | cernimus atque illas adsumere robora gentes, | concidere has*). Lucretius' emphasis on the mortal nature of the world in comparison to the immortal state of atoms, void and universe (Lucr. 5.351–63) finds a direct parallel in Pythagoras' notion that nothing dies in the world since 'all things in their sum total remain unchanged' (*Met.* 15.258 *summa tamen omnia constant*), as indeed 'the sum of all sums is eternal' (Lucr. 5.361 *summarum summa est aeterna*): therefore it would seem that, at least as far as the future of Rome is concerned, Lucretius' and Ovid's Pythagoras share the same view on the ultimately corruptible nature of the *Vrbs*.

Although the point must remain speculative, Ennius' Pythagorean proem to the *Annales* may have contained similar hints at the common destiny of individuals, cities or empires, all the more so since the proem was meant to introduce readers to a project on universal history, in its cyclical vein.<sup>165</sup> These hints would bear a particular significance in a poem which treated the Punic Wars in the immediate aftermath of the Second. If we turn again to look at Lucretius' references to the Punic Wars,<sup>166</sup> it cannot go unnoticed that they are all concerned, in one way or another, with the theme of death. Clearly the Punic Wars played a highly dramatic role in the collective memory of the Romans, and I have argued in [Chapter 1](#) that there could be a strong case for their being

<sup>165</sup> On the *Annales* as universal history, see Elliott (2010) and (2013) 233–94.

<sup>166</sup> A passage chock-full of Ennian echoes and previously taken into consideration for the hypothesis of a resemblance between Punic and Persian Wars, see [Chapter 1](#), pp. 61–3.

connected with the increasing numbers of tragedies staged at the Roman *ludi* in those years. As Ellen O’Gorman puts it, even before the Augustan age, ‘the destruction of Carthage ... and the retrospective construction of Carthage as a place that must be destroyed’, mark an important place in the Roman social imaginary.<sup>167</sup> This is clear, for instance, from Lucretius 3.830–42, where he creates a threefold equation and climactic chain of destruction from the individual experience of death, the Punic Wars, and the final catastrophe of the whole world. Just as the union of body and soul in the individual is dissolved in death (Lucr. 3.838–9 *cum corporis atque animai | discidium fuit*), the foundations of the earth were shaken in war (Lucr. 3.834–5 *omnia cum belli trepido concussa tumultu | horrida contremuere sub altis aetheris oris*, ‘when the whole world, shaken by the terrifying tumult of war, shivered and quaked under the lofty and breezy heaven’), and so the *discrimina* of the world will dissolve in the final destruction (3.842 *si terra mari miscebitur et mare caelo*, ‘if earth mixes with sea and sea with sky’). Thus, the memory of the Punic Wars serves to anticipate the arguments of Book 5 about the mortal nature of the world’s elements. Similarly, the second reference to the wars is also inscribed in the context of the transience of the human condition, since even ‘the son of Scipio, thunderbolt of war, terror of Carthage, gave his bones to the earth as though he had been the humblest menial’ (3.1034–5 *Scipiadas, belli fulmen, Carthaginis horror, | ossa dedit terrae proinde ac famul infimus esset*). Finally, the third and last mention of Carthage, which appears in the context of Lucretius’ discussion of the use of animals in warfare, mentions the Carthaginians’ training of war elephants (5.1302–4) only as a prelude for three lines of lingering on the horrors of war and its *discordia tristis* (5.1305–7 *sic alid ex alio peperit discordia tristis, | horribile humanis quod gentibus esset in armis, | inque dies bellis terroribus addidit augmen*, ‘thus foul Discord bred one thing after another, to be frightful in battle for the nations of men, and day after day it added new terror to warfare’).

<sup>167</sup> O’Gorman (2004) 101.

*Discordia tristis* (combined with 5.1302 *boues lucas ... taet-ras*, 'foul Lucanian oxen'), a clear allusion to Ennius' *Discordia taetra* (*Ann.* 225 Sk.), is only one of the many verbal echoes of the *Annales* in these passages.<sup>168</sup> As has been stated, it is impossible to reconstruct Ennius' Pythagorean views as applied to the Punic Wars, but it is in any case quite certain that the demon *Discordia* which triggers the Hannibalic War in *Annales* 7 is not only modelled on Empedocles' *Neikos*, but also akin to the Lucretian Strife of the elements that will ultimately cause the destruction of the world (Lucr. 5.380–415) and that, in its own turn, is explicitly portrayed as an impious war (Lucr. 5.381 *pugnent membra, pio nequaquam concita bello*, 'the limbs [of the universe] fight, roused in a most impious war'). In addition, as analysed by Philip Hardie, Empedocles is not only possibly a Pythagorean philosopher<sup>169</sup> and a model for both Lucretius and Ennius, but also a primary source for the speech of Ovid's Pythagoras.<sup>170</sup>

As Lucretius treats the Hannibalic War as a paradigmatic topic for eliciting thoughts on both the individual death and the decay of cities in the collective memory of the Romans, it is also possible that Ennius' philosophical proem to the *Annales* similarly touched, via Pythagoras and Empedocles as well as Polybius, on the reversals of fortune and the common destiny of *all* cities. Both pre-Augustan and post-Augustan authors interpreted the fall of cities such as Troy as a warning for the future of Rome: if we have seen that Ovid does not refrain from expressing his doubts about the *urbs aeterna*, Lucan's crude presentation of the ruins of Troy to his Caesar functions as a clear tragic warning for the Rome of the Civil Wars (Luc. 9.950–79). Clearly the Augustan poets had just experienced a big 'metamorphosis', in strictly Ovidian–Pythagorean

<sup>168</sup> Cf. Lucr. 3.834–5 and *Ann* 309 Sk. *Africa terribili tremit horrida terra tumultu* ('Africa, that wild land, is shaken by such terrifying tumult'), with Kenney (1971) 193–4; further parallels in Chapter 1, pp. 61–3. Cf. also Lucr. 5.1303–4 *belli docuerunt uulnera Poeni | sufferre* ('the Carthaginians taught them to endure the wounds of war') and *Ann.* 205 *uulnera belli desperrunt* ('they disdain the wounds of war').

<sup>169</sup> See Diog. Laert. 8.54–7, with Hardie (1995) 206.

<sup>170</sup> Hardie (1995).

terms: the one from Republic to Principate. The whole story of the *Aeneid*, that of 'a *translatio imperii* that will not be repeated',<sup>171</sup> joined with the new myth of *Roma aeterna*, will play a primary role in counterbalancing 'the anxiety that Augustus' perfected Rome may be prey to further change'.<sup>172</sup>

#### 4.5.3 *Urbs Capta vs. Urbs Aeterna*

This is the unavoidable background from which we must approach the theme of *urbs aeterna vs. urbs capta* presented by Virgil in the form of an opposition between Jupiter's prophecy of Rome's future and Juno's picture of Troy's past in the first book of the *Aeneid*. At *A.* 1.278–9 Jupiter consoles Venus by claiming that the renewed city of Augustus will not partake in the common Polybian pattern of rise and fall of cities, since he assures the Romans of boundless power, 'with no constraints in either space nor time', and a famous 'empire without end' (*his ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono; | imperium sine fine dedi*). Therefore Roman readers should be more than reassured when Aeneas approaches the frieze on the Carthaginian temple, where scenes of the capture of Troy are shown under the aegis of Juno. The passage, as mentioned before, clearly looks forward to the death of Dido and the imagined destruction of Carthage to which her death is compared, all the more so since Aeneas' reaction to the scene (1.462 *sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt*, 'here are the tears of things, and mortal fate touches the mind') sounds in line with the reaction of Scipio Aemilianus in front of Carthage in flames.

Yet, precisely because of this connection with Scipio Aemilianus' reflections, which brought him to the realistic and melancholic acceptance that Rome's time will also come, we are perhaps allowed to imagine that these scenes 'bring out proleptic effects'<sup>173</sup> as regards the future of Rome as well. This was Alessandro Barchiesi's view when he commented

<sup>171</sup> Hardie (1992) 60.

<sup>172</sup> Hardie (1995) 212.

<sup>173</sup> A. Barchiesi (1999) 331. But see *contra* Keith (2016), who reads instead the *urbes captae* of the *Aeneid* as antitypes of Rome.



that the poem 'might be composed in such a way as to leave empty spaces in which every successive reader can adjust his or her own perception of transitoriness'.<sup>174</sup> This is, in short, the everlasting strength of the *lacrimae rerum*.<sup>175</sup> Such recognition, when combined with Philip Hardie's reading of the site of Pallanteum in Book 8 as 'both a green-field site for future urban development and a settling for the romantic ruins of past cities', which elicits the idea that 'cities have been founded here before, and decayed – suggestive perhaps of what may happen to new cities',<sup>176</sup> creates the feeling that both scenes may be there to counterpose Jupiter's myth of the eternity of Rome, offering 'further voices' to this optimistic claim.

Leaving aside the question of the site of Pallanteum, the contrast offered in Book 1 can easily be solved in terms of an opposition between the truthful word of Jupiter and Juno's refusal to accept it, and also the question of the effectiveness of Scipio Aemilianus' foreboding as applied to Juno's temple could be answered by noticing that Virgil has already demonstrated how little he valued Scipio's curse on Carthage's soil when he presented the city (*A.* 1.418–29) not just as a mirror of Rome, but specifically as its Augustan reconstruction *Colonia Iulia Concordia Carthago*.<sup>177</sup> Therefore, from the height of the Augustan age, both Scipio's curse and his belief in Polybius' *anakyklosis* can be interpreted as past Republican beliefs – which Juno, however, does not manage to let go.

This contrast between Jupiter and Juno on the immortality/mortality of Rome provides yet another surprising point of comparison between Virgil's Carthaginian episode and Livy's third decade, where precisely the same opposition is embodied by Scipio and Hannibal, also in terms of a similar Augustan vs. Republican contrast.

<sup>174</sup> A. Barchiesi (1999) 344 n. 28.

<sup>175</sup> *sunt lacrimae rerum* has also been taken as the principal quotation and the *sphragis* of David Mitchell's 2012 novel *Cloud Atlas*, a story concerned not just with the transience of the human condition, but specifically with metempsychosis.

<sup>176</sup> Hardie (1992) 60.

<sup>177</sup> See n. 8.

Livy, as has been mentioned, shares with Virgil the responsibility of being one of the first authors to present the myth of *Roma aeterna*, a view which must have been difficult to endorse for an author who had Polybius as an eminent predecessor. Yet, Livy's endorsement of the new belief is not uncontroversial. For instance, he appears to agree by implication with Polybius' cyclical view of history already in terms of the structure of the third decade, a work which can paradoxically be considered both as a monograph and as a small part of a project on universal history not at all dissimilar in scope from Polybius' *Histories*.<sup>178</sup> There is in fact universal agreement on the division of the decade into two pentads, with the first (Books 21–5) recounting the successes of the Carthaginians up to the capture of Syracuse and the destruction of the Scipios in Spain, and the second (Books 26–30) staging the reverse recovery of the Romans from the recapture of Capua up to the battle of Zama. Furthermore, it has also been noted that Livy has deliberately faked the chronology of the events in order to construct a perfectly symmetrical narrative around the watershed of the end of 212 BCE.<sup>179</sup> Therefore, the parabola of the Hannibalic War, originally seen from a Punic point of view, is constructed around the Carthaginians' arrival at their ἀκμή, artistically inserted into the middle of the historical narrative, and their subsequent downfall. Unfortunately, we cannot ascertain whether Livy endorsed Polybius' views on the inevitability of the Carthaginians' failure in the war because of the elderliness of their city (Pol. 6.51.5), since Livy has no discussion of the relative chronology of the foundations of Carthage and Rome, something that must have been inserted at the start of Book 16, where he apparently described 'the origin of the Carthaginians and the beginnings of their city' (*Per. 16 Origo Carthaginiensium et primordia urbis eorum referuntur*).<sup>180</sup> This lost section of Book 16 would probably have shed light on Livy's relationship with Virgil's version of the mythical events,

<sup>178</sup> Cf. *Praef.* 10 and Pol. 1.4, with Feldherr (1998) 6.

<sup>179</sup> See Walsh (1961) 173, Burck (1971) 23–4.

<sup>180</sup> Nothing can be inferred from the other references to Carthage in the first decade, 4.29.8, 7.27.2, 9.19.12 and 43.26.

where the relative ancientness of Carthage is a notion stressed from the very beginning of the epic narrative (*A.* 1.12 *urbs antiqua fuit*), not without awareness of the traditional mythical chronology, which dated the fall of Troy to 1184 BCE and the foundation of Carthage to 814 BCE. It is possible that Livy reported different versions with or without explicit approval of any of them, depending on what was more ideologically relevant to his History: either Timaeus' synchronisation of the foundations of both cities in 814 BCE (Dion. Hal. 1.74), with a poignant foreknowledge of their future clash, or the view that later prevailed as an explanation for the outcome of the war according to Polybius' ἀνακύκλωσις, that 'the Phoenicians founded Carthage, fifty years before the capture of Troy' (App. *Pun.* 1.1 Καρχηδόνα τὴν ἐν Λιβύῃ Φοίνικες ᾤκισαν ἔτεσι πεντήκοντα πρὸ ἀλώσεως Ἰλίου).

Of course, Livy knows that Carthage is destined to fall, and so, in a certain sense, does his Hannibal. Yet they also both acknowledge the notion that a similar fate is reserved for Rome, not just notwithstanding the destruction of Carthage, but rather because of this very event. Unfortunately, as is well known, we lack Livy's account of the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE, which is only summarily preserved in the *Periocha* of Book 51, and therefore we cannot ascertain whether he also reported Scipio Aemilianus' reflections on the inevitable fall of his own city. Furthermore, one can only be left to speculate on Livy's views on Caesar's and Augustus' decision to recolonise Carthage notwithstanding Scipio's curse on the soil: on this matter, Livy may have specified, as Appian does, that the new city was *not* built on the site of the old one (App. *Pun.* 136 συνώκισε τὴν νῦν Καρχηδόνα, ἀγχοτάτω μάλιστα ἐκείνης, φυλαξάμενος τῆς πάλαι τὸ ἐπάρατον, '[Augustus] built the present Carthage, not on the site of the old one, but very near it, in order to avoid the ancient curse'), or he may have highlighted, as we saw that Virgil seems to do in his allusions to Roman Carthage, the irrelevance of Scipio's curse,<sup>181</sup> as part of a generally superstitious attitude which has by now been

<sup>181</sup> See E. L. Harrison (1984).

superseded and erased by the refounding of *Colonia Iulia Concordia Carthago*.

But the third decade, as Levene has recently noted,<sup>182</sup> acquires nonetheless a sense of closure for Carthage's prospects, especially by means of scenes that, to borrow a phrase which Barchiesi applies to the temple of Carthage, 'can be read as foreshadowing or typologies for future events'.<sup>183</sup> We have already seen one such scene: the burning of the Carthaginian ships at 30.43.12, which anticipates Scipio's view of Carthage in flames<sup>184</sup> and also provides a surprising parallel with the simile of the death of Dido (cf. *A.* 4.667–71 and Liv. 30.43.12 *quam si ipsa Carthago arderet*, 'it was as though Carthage itself were in flames').<sup>185</sup> In addition, one could also count the 'broad alignment between Carthage and Troy',<sup>186</sup> which Levene notices at many points in the decade, as one of Livy's allusions to Carthage's fall: this is another motif that pushes Livy's work closer to that of Virgil, where the individual story of Queen Dido may also be seen to stage a pattern of rise and fall similar to that of her historical city, from her prosperous enterprise in *Aeneid* 1 to her tragic downfall in *Aeneid* 4.

However, it is only at Liv. 30.44 (a passage which I have treated in the previous section in conjunction with Dido's curse) that the whole significance of the Carthaginians' forebodings is finally made to emerge, first through the historian's attempt to arrange the times in order with a brief chronological summary (30.44.1–3), which nonetheless continues to look further than is allowed (30.44.3 ... *id bellum exitio Carthaginis finiret*, '... that the war would end with the destruction of Carthage'), and then when Hannibal seems to answer his writer's prediction of Carthage's destruction by expressing his view that precisely that destruction will rebound on the head of the victors (30.44.8 *nulla magna ciuitas diu quiescere potest* ..., 'no great state can stay at peace for long...').<sup>187</sup> In this passage,

<sup>182</sup> Levene (2010) 10–11.

<sup>183</sup> Barchiesi (1999) 33.

<sup>184</sup> Levene (2010) 12, 99.

<sup>185</sup> See Chapter 3, p. 155.

<sup>186</sup> Levene (2010) 99.

<sup>187</sup> See above, p. 234.

Hannibal's tragic character appears evident from more than one element: the prophetic nature of his curse,<sup>188</sup> his embodiment of the vengeful fury evoked by Dido, his ἀναγνώρισις of his previously hubristic character after the experience of a properly tragic περιπέτεια<sup>189</sup> and his dramatic inability to turn back the clock of time.<sup>190</sup> To these elements, one must add Livy's probable endorsement of the view of the Civil Wars as an inherited guilt, a notion which cannot but conflate epic, history and tragedy with the sudden transformation of the Roman Republic from a shame- into a guilt-culture.<sup>191</sup>

Hannibal's view, however, just like Juno's in the *Aeneid*, is counterbalanced by Scipio's appropriation of Jupiter's *imperium sine fine*:

quid? si ego morerer, mecum expiratura res publica, mecum casurum imperium populi Romani erat? Ne istuc Iuppiter optimus maximus sirit, urbem auspicato deis auctoribus *in aeternum* conditam huic fragili et mortali corpori aequalem esse.

(Liv. 28.28.11)

Tell me, if I had been dying would the state have breathed its last with me? Would the empire of the Roman people have fallen with me? May Jupiter the best and greatest forbid that the city, founded with due auspices and favour of the gods to endure *forever*, should live no longer than this frail, mortal body!

This is the passage where Scipio's words break the spell of historical fiction and drag the readers forward in time to the era of Augustus by endorsing the same suggestions expressed in the *Aeneid*, namely that the city that Aeneas is going to found will be able to arrest this chain of rises and falls of empires of which its mother town has by now become a symbol. The third decade now appears trapped between the rationalisations of Polybius, sponsored by both Hannibal and Africanus

<sup>188</sup> Reeve (1987) 320.

<sup>189</sup> Mader (1993).

<sup>190</sup> de Romilly (1968); cf. Dido's emphatic desire for regression, with Schiesaro (2005a).

<sup>191</sup> Now historiography, like tragedy, 'suggests a perpetual reflection about the relation between this series of events and the past or the future; it discusses and meditates about intricate causes and responsibilities', de Romilly (1968) 11.

Minor, and the religious credos of the Augustan propaganda, put in the mouth of Africanus Maior. When the voice of the present is made to speak, the monographic nature of the decade is temporarily abandoned for an engagement with a broader view of universal history, a technique that is specifically Polybian in its methodological foundations, but utterly un-Polybian in its ideological outcomes. Outside the constraint of this ten-book history, the juxtaposition and antithesis of the Punic Wars with the civil conflict gives them further significance. The Augustan times step in, and the role of Tragedy as 'the successor of apocalypse'<sup>192</sup> acquires significance in view of the apocalyptic fall of the Republic that these authors have witnessed and are now ascribing to Carthaginian curses. Both Hannibal's and Dido's predictions have proved correct, and the Rome of Horace's *Epode* 16<sup>193</sup> has indeed fallen – yet the twin poem of that *Epode*, *Eclogue* 4, has already specified that 'the great line of the centuries begins anew' from those ashes (*E.* 4.5 *magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo*), just like the Phoenix in Pythagoras' speech (*Met.* 15.391–407) and specifically under the patronage of a tragic historian such as Pollio (*E.* 4.11–13).<sup>194</sup> In view of the Livian Scipio's prophetic words and for readers who are acquainted with the aftermath of the Civil Wars, Hannibal's prophecy no longer sounds so threatening. Augustus has succeeded exactly where both Dido and Hannibal have failed: tragic characters are bound by their inability to go back and change their actions, namely by Lady Macbeth's 'What's done cannot be undone', rendered by Hannibal at 30.30.7 *sed praeterita magis reprehendi possunt quam corrigi* ('the past is sooner disapproved of than changed for the better'). Augustus has demonstrated that the arrow of time can be turned back as far as the Golden Age, so that the end is now projected in a far-removed future for those who still

<sup>192</sup> I borrow the phrase from Kermode (1966) 82: when the end is transformed into a matter of imminence, tragedy becomes 'the successor of apocalypse ... in accord with the notion of an endless world'.

<sup>193</sup> See above, p. 235, for the connection between *Epode* 16 and Liv. 30.44.8.

<sup>194</sup> Cf. *Met.* 15.440 *non tota cadet ... Troia*, 'Troy will not wholly fall', with Keith (2016) 175–80.

accept a cyclical view of history. This is the real power of the Augustan Re-evolution.

#### 4.5.4 *The End is the Beginning is the End*

There is at least one more important passage of Livy's third decade that I would like to connect to the death of Dido in the *Aeneid*, in order to emphasise the similar approach taken by these two authors in anticipating the 'future in the past' through a thick net of historical and tragic allusions, and this is the capture of Saguntum in Livy 21.

This episode, as has been noted,<sup>195</sup> displays both tragic and epic echoes, which have been read as proof of Livy's reception of tragic historiography, especially when compared with Polybius' treatment of the same matter. The Greek historian, in his sustained critique of tragic historiography, singles out the *urbs capta* as one of the *topoi* through which the historian is more liable to fall into the traps of a pathetic narration. His main target, Phylarchus, 'eager to arouse pity and sympathy in his readers' (2.56.7 σπουδάζων δ' εἰς ἔλεον ἐκκαλεῖσθαι τοὺς ἀναγινώσκοντας καὶ συμπαθεῖς ποιεῖν τοῖς λεγομένοις), 'brings in clinging women with their hair dishevelled and their breasts bare, and again tears and laments of men and women carried away together with their children and aged parents' (2.56.7 εἰσάγει περιπλοκάς γυναικῶν καὶ κόμας διερριμμένας καὶ μαστῶν ἐκβολάς, πρὸς δὲ τούτοις δάκρυα καὶ θρήνους ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν ἀναμιζτέκνοις καὶ γονεῦσι γηραιοῖς ἀπαγομένων). A serious historical author 'should not try to thrill by talking such marvels' (2.56.10 δεῖ τοιγαροῦν οὐκ ἐκπλήττειν τὸν συγγραφέα τερατευόμενον), but simply 'record what really happened and what really was said' (τῶν δὲπραχθέντων καὶ ῥηθέντων κατ' ἀλήθειαν αὐτῶν μνημονεύειν πάντα). In the next book, as soon as the narrative allows him, Polybius himself sets an example in his description of the capture of Saguntum (Pol. 3.17), where he provides no hint at the reactions of the

<sup>195</sup> See in particular Cipriani (1984).

Saguntines, but only briefly recounts the events, in Leopold von Ranke's style, 'as they actually happened',<sup>196</sup> focusing his attention on Hannibal's strategic calculations (3.17.4–7), since the work of a serious historian lies in a careful enquiry on the causes of events. Having explained the reasons for Hannibal's capture of Saguntum, he thus covers the whole eight-month-long siege in a few lines, stressing Hannibal's leading role in the enterprise,<sup>197</sup> and then closes with a note on how the Carthaginians profited from the siege, according to Hannibal's previous calculations (3.17.10–11).

Famously, Livy gives a much longer, 'more detailed, but less reliable account':<sup>198</sup> his description of the actual siege of the city encompasses eight chapters of Book 21 (7–14), plus two on preliminaries (5–6) and a final, recapitulatory one (15), which discusses the aftermath of the siege and the contrasting chronologies. Within this portion of the book, the account of the siege is 'artistically divided into three parts', with 9.3–11.2 (the Roman mission) and 12–13 (Alco's and Alorcus' mission) to work as 'entr'actes' in order to maintain the suspense in the readers.<sup>199</sup> Ironically, Livy's start of the narrative is in striking continuity with Polybius, since both begin with a note on the city's wealth (cf. Liv. 21.7.2 *ciuitas ... opulentissima* and Pol. 3.17.3) and a geographical introduction to the city (cf. Liv. 21.7.2 *sita passus mille ferme a mari*, 'it was situated about a mile from the sea', and Pol. 3.17.2 ἀπέχει δὲ τῆς θαλάττης ὡς ἑπτὰ στάδια, 'it is at a distance of about seven stades from the

<sup>196</sup> See [Chapter 3 n. 41](#).

<sup>197</sup> Pol. 3.17.8–9 τοιοῦτοις δὲ χρώμενος διαλογισμοῖς, ἐνεργῶς προσέκειτο τῇ πολιορκίᾳ, τότε μὲν ὑπόδειγμα τῷ πλήθει ποιῶν αὐτὸν καὶ γινόμενος αὐτουργὸς τῆς ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ταλαιπωρίας, ἔστι δ' ὅτε παρακαλῶν τὰ πλήθη καὶ παραβόλως διδούς αὐτὸν εἰς τοὺς κινδύνους. πᾶσαν δὲ κακοπάθειαν καὶ μέριμναν ὑπομείνας τέλος ἐν ὀκτῶ μηνὶ κατὰ κράτος εἴλε τὴν πόλιν, 'from all these considerations he actively pursued the siege, now setting an example to the soldiers by sharing personally the fatigue of the battering operations, now cheering on the troops and exposing himself recklessly to danger. At length after eight months of hardship and anxiety he took the city by storm.'

<sup>198</sup> Walbank (1957) 327. Cf. De Sanctis (1917) 174: 'Segue, per quasi 10 capi ... un racconto della espugnazione di Sagunto, gonfio di retorica, arricchito dalla poco seria storiella d'Alcone e d'Alorco, steso senza molto riguardo alla cronologia, né intelligenza di cose militari ...'.

<sup>199</sup> Walsh (1973) 134.



sea'), which is particularly important in view of the debate as to whether the Carthaginians violated the Ebro treaty.<sup>200</sup> Yet Livy's start of the chapter *in medias res* (21.7.1 *dum ea Romani parant consultantque, iam Saguntum summa ui oppugnabatur*, 'while the Romans were thus planning and deliberating, Saguntum was already being attacked with the greatest vigour') is in striking contrast, in terms of dramatic vividness and engagement, to Polybius' brief and unadorned reference to Hannibal's advance towards Saguntum.<sup>201</sup> Thus, Livy is already signalling his un-Polybian treatment of the episode, whose epic features<sup>202</sup> are here anticipated by the abrupt perfect *fuit* (*ciuitas ea longe opulentissima ultra Hiberum fuit*, 'there was a city, by far the wealthiest of those beyond the Ebro'), which draws the passage close not only to Virgil's presentation of Ardea,<sup>203</sup> but perhaps more appropriately to the *Aeneid*'s first mention of Carthage-as-Troy (*A.* 1.12 *urbs antiqua fuit*, 'there once was an ancient city'), similarly singled out for her wealth (*A.* 1.14 *diues opum*, 'rich in resources').<sup>204</sup> This verbal parallel would be perhaps of little interest had not Edgeworth highlighted the strong thematic links between the fall of Saguntum and that of Carthage:<sup>205</sup> Livy's representation of the mass suicide of the Saguntines at the end of the siege (21.14), symmetrically recalled in the mass suicide of the

<sup>200</sup> See Chapter 3.3, pp. 186–90.

<sup>201</sup> Pol. 3.17.1 Ἀννίβας δὲ μετὰ τῆς δυνάμεως ἀναζεύξας ἐκ τῆς Καίνῃς πόλεως προῆγε, ποιοῦμενος τὴν πορείαν ἐπὶ τὴν Ζάκανθαν, 'Hannibal, for his part, quitted New Carthage with his army and advanced towards Saguntum.'

<sup>202</sup> Analysed by Cipriani (1984) 42–54, both linguistically (see 21.7.4 *Hannibal infesto exercitu*, 7.7 *iuentus delecta*, 7.8 *tela micare*; to which I add the repetition of Virgil's 'favourite adjective', *ingens* at 7.7, 8.6, 15.1) and stylistically (e.g. the 'Ennian' *parekbasis* at 7.5 *angulus muri erat ... uergens*; the expansion of time and loss of time-coordinates, the ecphrasis of the *phalarica* at 8.10–12 as a 'technique of delay' in the narrative).

<sup>203</sup> *A.* 7.411–12 *locus Ardea quondam | dictus auis, et nunc magnum manet Ardea nomen | sed fortuna fuit*, 'there was once a place called Ardea by our ancestors, and now Ardea remains a great name, but its fortune has gone'; see Cipriani (1984) 42: 'una rievocazione, in questo caso, utile anche come chiave d'interpretazione letteraria oltre che stilistica del brano liviano. Il riferimento ... rafforza la stima nei confronti della popolazione saguntina, ne giustifica l'ascesi ... ne aumenta il tasso di nobiltà ...'.

<sup>204</sup> See Chapter 2, p. 101.

<sup>205</sup> Edgeworth (1989).

Astapans towards the end of the war (28.23.1–5),<sup>206</sup> anticipates the episode of the suicide of the last defenders of Carthage in the temple of Aesculapius, set ablaze by the Romans (App. *Pun.* 130–1); the desertion of Alorcus (21.12–13) closely resembles the desertion of Hasdrubal just before the fall of the city (*Pun.* 131) and the terms offered to the Saguntines at 21.12.5 recall those offered to the Carthaginians (*Pun.* 80–1 and Livy *Per.* 48–9).<sup>207</sup> However, the fall of Saguntum both prefigures the destruction of Carthage and provides us with a warning of what might happen to Rome in a counterfactual history, since it is presented as Hannibal's first step in his march against Rome. This is highlighted by the Romans' reaction to the news, with the expression of such grief, pity, shame and wrath, 'as if the enemy were already at the gates' (Liv. 21.16.2 *tantusque simul maeror patres misericordiaeque sociorum peremptorum indigne et pudor non lati auxilii et ira in Carthaginenses metusque de summa rerum cepit, uelut si iam ad portas hostis esset*, 'and so great was the grief of the senators, and their pity at the unmerited doom of their allies, and their shame at having failed to help them, and their wrath against the Carthaginians and fear for the safety of the commonwealth – as though the enemy were already at their gates'),<sup>208</sup> and later by Hannibal's comparison between the two cities (21.30.9–10 *Saguntum ut caperetur, quid per octo menses periculi, quid laboris exhaustum esse? Romam, caput orbis terrarum, petentibus quicquam adeo asperum atque arduum uideri, quod inceptum moretur?*, 'to capture Saguntum, what dangers or what hardships had they not endured for eight long months? But to them, who were aiming at Rome, the capital of the world, could anything seem so painful or so difficult as to delay their enterprise?').<sup>209</sup>

<sup>206</sup> Cf. also the capture of Abydos by Philip (31.17–18); here, in Edgeworth's words (1989) 144, Livy 'deliberately reinforced that horrified expectancy (i.e. of the fall of Carthage) by reintroducing the paradigm at the start of the Fourth Decade ... the symmetry of the placement of three of these episodes can be no coincidence: very early in 21, early in 31; somewhere in 51 – all at the start of a new decade'.

<sup>207</sup> See Edgeworth (1989) 143–4.

<sup>208</sup> See Cipriani (1984) 37–8.

<sup>209</sup> Edgeworth (1989) 140.

Livy's capture of Saguntum is artistically constructed as a dramatic episode in its own right, whose beginning is signalled by Hannibal, 'sower of discord' (21.6.2 *litis sator*), violently crashing into the narrative (21.7.4 *infesto exercitu ingressus fines, peruastatis passim agris urbem tripertito adgreditur*, 'Hannibal crossed the borders with his hostile army and, having laid waste their country far and wide, advanced with his three-columned array against the city'), and by the mention of a giant tower (21.7.7 *et turris ingens imminabat et murus, ut in suspecto loco ...*, 'there was a huge, overhanging tower, and a wall – as was natural in a place suspected of danger ...') – surprisingly akin to the one of *Aeneid* 9 (*A.* 9.530–1 *turris erat uasto suspectu et pontibus altis, | opportuna loco*, 'there was a tower, tremendous to the upward gaze and with high connecting bridges, strategically situated'), in its turn reminiscent of the fall of Troy<sup>210</sup> – whose fall will emphatically mark the end of the narrative (Liv. 21.14.2 *turris diu quassata prociderat*, 'the tower, long battered, had collapsed') after the walls have been destroyed and the *iuuentus delecta* of 21.7.7<sup>211</sup> has sacrificed itself by 'opposing its bodies in defence of their bare town' (21.8.8 *Saguntinis pro nudata moenibus patria corpora opponentibus*). The mass suicide of the last defenders, with the pathetic mention of the 'panic and perturbation' that 'took hold of the whole city' (21.14.2 *cum ex eo pauor ac trepidatio totam urbem peruasisset*), is thus followed by Hannibal's order to slaughter all the male adults and by the intrusion of the narrator's voice in the form of a rhetorical question (21.14.4 *cui enim parci potuit ex iis qui aut inclusi cum coniugibus ac liberis domos super se ipsos concremauerunt aut armati nullum ante finem pugnae quam morientes fecerunt?*, 'who could be spared of those who either shut themselves up with their wives and children and burned the houses over their own heads, or took arms and never gave over fighting until they died?').

<sup>210</sup> Cf. 2.460–7; see Hardie (1994) 172–3 and 10–14 for the significance of the capture of Troy in the whole scene.

<sup>211</sup> Compare the Carthaginian youth accompanying Dido to the hunt at *A.* 4.130 *delecta iuuentus* (the *iunctura* is also found at *A.* 8.499 and 9.226).

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Within the account of the siege, both interludes hint, one more explicitly than the other, at the interpretation of this passage as an anticipation of the fall of Carthage. As has been mentioned, the mission of Alco and Alorcus (21.12–13), defined by De Sanctis as ‘a not so serious fable’,<sup>212</sup> looks forward to the betrayal of Hasdrubal at the end of the Third Punic War and gives Livy the opportunity to recount Hannibal's terms for negotiation: the surrender of the whole city, of its gold and silver, ‘both public and private’ (21.13.6 *publicum priuatumque*), and the procession of its inhabitants from Saguntum ‘with two garments each’ (21.13.7 *cum binis uestimentis*), terms which closely resemble those of Censorinus when he orders the Carthaginians: ‘yield Carthage to us, and betake yourselves where you like within your own territory, at a distance of at least ten miles from the sea, for we are resolved to raze your city to the ground’ (App. *Pun.* 81 ἔκστητε τῆς Καρχηδόνης ἡμῖν, καὶ ἀνοικήσασθε ὅπῃ θέλετε τῆς ὑμετέρας, ὀγδοήκοντα σταδίου ἀπὸ θαλάσσης τήνδε γὰρ ἡμῖν ἐγνωσται κατασκάψαι). More explicitly, Hanno's second speech three chapters earlier had already established the equation between the two cities:

Carthagini nunc Hannibal uineas turresque admouet; Carthaginis moenia quatit ariete; Sagunti ruinae – falsus utinam uates sim! – nostris capitibus incident ...

(Liv. 21.10.10)

It is against Carthage that Hannibal is now bringing his penthouses and towers; it is the walls of Carthage that he is battering with his rams; Saguntus' fall – may I be a fake prophet! – will fall upon our heads ...

Here Hanno, revealing himself as the ‘tragic warner’ of Hannibal's hubristic character,<sup>213</sup> picks up the same fire imagery with which he had brought to a close his brief speech in 21.3, demonstrating that the ‘small spark’ about which he had tried to warn the Carthaginians (21.3.6 *ne quandoque paruus hic ignis incendium ingens exsuscitet*, ‘lest one day this small spark kindle a great fire’) has by now turned into a conflagration

<sup>212</sup> De Sanctis (1917) 174: see p. 170 n. 179.

<sup>213</sup> Mader (1993).

(21.10.4 *iuuenem flagrantem cupidine regni*, 'a youth burning with lust for sovereign power', *uelut materiam igni prae-bentes*, 'as though heaping fuel on a fire'; 5 *aluitis ergo hoc incendium quo nunc ardetis*, 'you have fed this fire by which you are now burning'; 11 *hunc iuuenem tamquam furiam facemque huius belli odi ac detestor*, 'I loathe and abominate this young man, who is the fury and the blazing torch of this war'). In another parallel with *Aeneid* 4, Hanno's metaphorical use of fire – straightforwardly adopted by Livy himself (21.11.3–4 *interim animos eorum nunc ira in hostes stimulando, nunc spe praemiorum accendit ... adeo accensi omnes sunt*, 'meanwhile he kindles their ardour, now by inciting them to rage against their enemies, now by inflaming them with hopes of rewards ... they were all so inflamed') – eventually becomes a concrete and fundamental element in the narrative, when the Saguntines, like Dido, jump into the pyre (21.14.1) or die letting the houses burn over their heads (21.14.4). What is more, since this is the fate reserved for Carthage itself, Hanno also lends a hand to interpreting Horace's famously tricky *parentibus abominatus Hannibal*, 'Hannibal, abhorred by the parents' (*Epod.* 16.8), as not only Rome's, but also Carthage's own bogey-man.<sup>214</sup>

Perhaps there is not enough poetry in Livy to read the fall of Saguntum with the same everlasting emotional involvement that Virgil's *lacrimae rerum* cause when applied to the fate of the *mortalia*, and thus the recognition that the fall of Saguntum is a typological prefiguration of the destruction of Carthage does not seem to call into question the theme of the *urbs aeterna* in the same way as the pictures on Juno's temple appear to do. However, the passage may be better analysed in terms of its connection to the death of Dido at the end of *Aeneid* 4, since that also prefigures the fall of Carthage through the Trojan topos, and one that does not seem to call Rome into question. Indeed, Edgeworth highlighted the fact that the death of Dido fulfils exactly the same role, especially as regards Dido's similarities with the wife of Hasdrubal, when the pyre of Dido becomes the pyre in the temple of

<sup>214</sup> For Hannibal as a 'nursery bogey-man' in Rome, see Horsfall (1973) 138.

Eshmoun (App. *Pun.* 131, Liv. *Per.* 51) and she dies, like Hasdrubal's wife, 'amid the fires which have turned the whole temple into the final funeral pyre of Carthage'.<sup>215</sup> Such similarities, according to Edgeworth, would also indicate a parallel between Aeneas and Hasdrubal, the latter also addressed as a traitor to the city by his dying wife, as the first and last deserter of Carthage.

To Edgeworth's suggestions, I would like to add a similar 'Pythagorean' reading of the future of Carthage in Appian and Virgil, since both texts seem concerned with the transferral of traits, or the actual metamorphosis of a city which has by now run its course. 'We consider *you* to be Carthage, not the ground where you live' (App. *Pun.* 89 Καρχηδόνα γὰρ ὑμᾶς, οὐ τὸ ἔδαφος ἡγούμεθα), says Censorinus to the desperate Carthaginian envoys. Indeed Carthage lives on, not last in the form of vengeful demons, who take the form of Furies and Maenads in the Carthaginians' reaction to Censorinus' words:

Καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦδε ἦν οἷστρος ἄλογός τε καὶ μαινώδης, οἷον ἐν τοῖς Βακχείοις πάθεσι φασι τὰς μαινάδας ἀλλόκοτα καινουργεῖν.

(App. *Pun.* 92)

Then followed a scene of blind, ravaging madness, like the strange acts which the Maenads are said to perform when under the influence of Bacchus.

Some fall upon those senators who have advised giving the hostages and 'tear them into pieces' (*Pun.* 92 ἠκίζοντο καὶ διέσπων), the city is 'full of wailing and wrath, of fear and threatenings' (οἰμωγῆς τε ἅμα καὶ ὀργῆς καὶ δέους καὶ ἀπειλῆς ἢ πόλις ἐνεπέπληστο) and the mothers of the hostages shriek 'like Erinyes in a tragedy' (οἷά τινες ἐκ τραγωδίας ἐρινύδες). These are the foreboding vengeful *Dirae* whom Dido sees in her dreams (*A.* 4.473 *ultrices* ... *Dirae*) and whom she also summons towards her death (4.610 *Dirae ultrices*): their incarnation, Hannibal, born from the ashes of her pyre, and the burnt bones of her body (4.625 *nostris ex ossibus*), will

<sup>215</sup> Edgeworth (1976–7).

chase the Trojans with fire (4.626 *face*). Dido's Bacchic wandering throughout the city as a maddened Maenad (4.300–1 *saeuit inops animi totamque incensa per urbem | bacchatur*, 'out of her mind and burning with passion she rages and raves throughout the city, like a Bacchant'), taken up by *Fama* just after her death (4.666 *concussam bacchatur Fama per urbem*, '*Fama* raves throughout the stricken city, like a Bacchant'), already signals the indelible connection between the first and the last women of the city. But just as Dido's death prefigures not only the destruction of Carthage, but also the repercussions brought about by Carthage's disappearance for the crisis of the Republic, the demons she evokes similarly anticipate not only the whole experience of the three Punic Wars, but also those Carthaginian *manes* present in Horace's Ode to Pollio (Hor. *Carm.* 2.1.25–8), who will continue to affect Romans during the Civil Wars and up to the fall of the Republic.<sup>216</sup>

If this is the case, then the following *Ludi* of Book 5 should not be interpreted too optimistically. These *Ludi*, I suggest, provide Virgil with the opportunity to seal his historical allegory of the Punic Wars on an apparently positive note which does not, however, shy away from hinting at the fact that this Augustan re-evocation and restaging of the Punic Wars' triumph cannot eventually whitewash the reality of recent civil conflict.

According to Goldschmidt, Virgil evokes in Book 5 various episodes from both the First and the Second Punic Wars, thus engaging once again with Naevius and Ennius in a literary rivalry which takes the concrete form of various competitions in a metaliterary reading of the text.<sup>217</sup> Such episodes include the destruction of the Roman fleet at Drepanum in 249 (hinted at by the *triste augurium* of 5.7 which takes concrete form in the burning of the ships at 5.659–84), the various calamities of Segesta (founded by Aeneas at 5.746–58, her future siege

<sup>216</sup> See [Introduction](#), p. 5.

<sup>217</sup> Goldschmidt (2013) 115–27.

in the First War may be alluded to by the omen of the flaming arrow at 5.522–8),<sup>218</sup> the siege of Eryx as the boxing match,<sup>219</sup> the battleship as a prefiguration of *naumachiae* from both First and Second Wars, and Aeneas' foundation of the temple of Venus Erycina (5.759–61) as an allusion to the dedication of a temple to the same goddess by Quintus Fabius Maximus in 215 BCE.

The evocation of the temple of Venus Erycina is particularly interesting. Lines 5.774–5 (*ipse caput tonsae foliis euinctus oliuae | stans procul in prora pateram tenet*, 'he himself [Aeneas], his forehead bound with shorn olive leaves, standing apart on the prow, holds the cup') are a self-quotation from *G.* 3.21 (*ipse caput tonsae foliis ornatus oliuae | dona feram*, 'I myself [Virgil], my forehead adorned with shorn olive leaves, shall bring the gifts'). A direct parallel is established not just between Aeneas and Virgil, but between the *Ludi* of *Aeneid* 5 and the theatre-temple monument of *Georgics* 3, a monument which is commonly recognised as a prefiguration of the *Aeneid* and which, so I have argued, boasts of the future victories over the barbarians of the Augustan empire while also ultimately signposting their fictional and ideological nature.<sup>220</sup> This parallel is fundamental to the understanding of the *Ludi* in Book 5: just as the painted barbarians on the theatre-temple of the *Georgics* are being used as a decoy for a victory that ultimately celebrates a triumph of Romans over Romans, the *Ludi* of Book 5 also celebrate a victory over barbarians who, as we have seen, were never wholly, or really, barbarians. The parallel between the Actian Triumph depicted on the theatre-temple monument of *Georgics* 3 and these triumphal *Ludi*, also highlighted by references to the Actian Games at Nicopolis in the ship race of Book 5,<sup>221</sup> bolsters the Egyptian connotations of Dido-as-Cleopatra and reminds readers once again that, much earlier than the Punic Wars, Virgil's focus rests primarily on the civil conflict.

<sup>218</sup> See already Heinze (1993) 134.

<sup>219</sup> See already Traill (2001).

<sup>220</sup> I have treated this scene in Giusti (forthcoming).

<sup>221</sup> See Hardie (1987).



Such concern is hidden in the burning of the Trojan ships behind an apparent evocation of the defeat at Drepanum in 249 BCE, and comes out explicitly, but almost involuntarily, in Ascanius' outburst of resentment:

'quis furor iste nouus? quo nunc, quo tenditis' inquit  
'heu miserae ciues? non hostem inimicaque castra  
Argium, uestras spes uritis.

(A. 5.670–2)

'What is this new madness?' he cried, 'Where now, oh where are you going, unhappy citizens? It is not the enemy, not the hostile camp of the Argives that you are burning, but your own hopes for the future!

These words inevitably bring to mind not just civil conflict in general, but more specifically Horace's cry in *Epode* 7 (cf. *Epod.* 7.1 *quo quo scelesti ruitis?*, 'where, where are you rushing to, damned citizens?' and A. 5.670 *quo nunc, quo tenditis*), where the citizens have been caught up in a similar *furor* (*Epod.* 7.13–14 *furorne caecus an rapit uis acrior | an culpa?*, 'is it blind frenzy that hurries you along, or some stronger force, or a guilt?'), which pushes them to attack their own civic body rather than external enemies, such as – ironically – Carthage (*Epod.* 7.5–6 *non ut superbas inuidae Karthaginis | Romanus arces ureret*, 'not so that the Romans would burn the arrogant citadel of jealous Carthage'). A similar formulation, clearly influenced by *Epode* 7,<sup>222</sup> will famously open Lucan's account of Civil War (Luc. 1.8 *quis furor, o ciues, quae tanta licentia ferri?*, 'what is this frenzy, o citizens, what is such unrestrained freedom to slaughter?').

If this reading is tenable, then we can see how Iris, in the closing scene of Book 4 (4.693–705), performs not only the function of delivering Dido's soul to the Underworld, but also acts as Mercury's counterpart in bringing through the

<sup>222</sup> Cf. also Luc. 1.3 *in sua uictrici conuersum uiscera dextra*, 'having turned its victorious right hand against its own vitals' and *Epod.* 7.9–10 *sua | urbs haec periret dextera*, 'so that this city would perish by its own right hand'.

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air Juno's equally dread commands.<sup>223</sup> At the end of Book 5, she has become not just Juno's, but specifically Dido's messenger: the first incarnation of those vindictive Carthaginian demons who seek and ultimately find their revenge in the shedding of Roman brotherly blood.

<sup>223</sup> If we can read an echo of *A.* 4.378 *interpretes diuum fert horrida iussa per auras*, 'the messenger of the gods brings fearful commands through the winds' in 4.703 *iussa fero* ('I bring the orders') where *iussa*, however, is a past participle agreeing with Iris.

## CONCLUSION: ALL THE PERFUMES OF ARABIA

This book started from the premise that the ideology of Caesar Augustus served the needs to preserve and promote the regime in explicit rupture with late Republican history but in continuity with the history of the middle Republic, while also advocating the necessity of an external enemy in order to avert the recent ghosts of Civil War. From this point of view, it was unavoidable that the authors who were taking part in building and promoting that ideology would engage with the history of the three Punic Wars, with the representation of Carthage and the Carthaginians, and with the literary and cultural work of the middle Republic that they were aiming at evoking as well as substituting. Virgil's *Aeneid*, so I have concluded, plays an active and fundamental part in this process, a process that I do not hesitate to call a practice of revisionist history under an autocratic, if less than totalitarian, regime.<sup>1</sup> This book has explored two self-standing, but mutually enlightening, aspects in which the *Aeneid* represents and exploits Carthage within the programmatic needs of Augustus' restoration of the middle Republic.

In the first half of this book (Chapters 1 and 2) I have suggested that Virgil's opening of his epic on the barbarian-looking shores of Rome's arch-enemy is suitable to the necessity, in the Augustan era, to evoke foreign war in an attempt to white-wash the recent reality of internal conflict. Below the surface, the *Aeneid* appears to exploit a longstanding set of orientalist and barbarian tropes in order to present mythical Carthage as the 'other' of the middle Republic, making her a double both of Cleopatra's Egypt and of Parthia, the threat of which is constantly evoked in the Augustan age, following Sallust's

<sup>1</sup> See Giusti (2016c), on which this conclusion is partly based.

lessons on *metus hostilis*. These barbarian connotations of Carthage, however, are arguably much fainter in the *Aeneid* than the opposite suggestion that Carthage works instead as a mirroring image of Rome, with Dido acting as a ‘second self’ to the hero’s journey, and her Carthaginians playing an analogous role to the similarly eastern Trojans, or would-be Romans.<sup>2</sup> This combination of foreignness and familiarity, polarity and analogy in Virgil’s Carthage works on more than one level. While it certainly problematises Roman identity (as it may have done already in the middle Republic), or at any rate Aeneas’ quest for a renewed Roman identity, it also demonstrates that notwithstanding Virgil’s and Augustus’ efforts to represent the enemy as a luxurious and barbarous oriental queen, it is the Civil War against fellow Romans that remains the main concern of this post-traumatic literature. What is more, this competing dynamic of Virgil’s portrait of Carthage, together with its prevalently theatrical setting in the shaping of *Aeneid* 4 as a tragedy, and in continuous references to theatrical spectacles, sets up the illusion of an external enemy only to dissolve it, shedding light on the artificial construction of Carthaginians and barbarians in the age of Augustus.

I reach similar conclusions in the analysis offered in [Chapters 3](#) and [4](#). There, I suggested more explicitly that authors such as Virgil and Livy are united in their presentation of unabashedly ‘fake’ or inconsistent versions of mythical and historical events that better suit the present needs of the Augustan age. The impossibility of the meeting between Aeneas and Dido plays a fundamental role in this argument. The historical Queen Dido, Phoenician founder of Carthage and loyal widow to her dead husband, is not only despoiled of all her Semitic traits and brought onto the Augustan stage to act as a double of Egyptian Cleopatra in her submission to a proto-Roman hero, but is also unashamedly carried back in time 370 years in order to play the role imposed onto her by this fiction. Moreover, as the story progresses, readers of the *Aeneid* familiar with the epics of Naevius and Ennius become

<sup>2</sup> On Dido as ‘second self’ see Van Nortwick (1992) 89–124 and Reed (2007) 73–100.

more and more aware of the clock of history ticking behind the narrative of the love story. This mythical *aition* for the Punic Wars is itself shaped as the history and epic of the three wars, from the moment we see the bronze beaks of the Roman ships floating in the Sicilian waves, up to the identification between Dido burning on the funeral pyre and the collapse of Carthage in flames. And yet this story is also interspersed with echoes of the Civil Wars, reminders of that traumatic future in the past which, according to Sallust, had been activated by the very destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE. On the one hand, and this must sound paradoxical, the fact that the historical Punic Wars are only apparently left in silence in the poem invites the readers to look for the poem's hidden hints at the conflict and for the allegory of the three wars at work behind the whole episode, and thus eventually turns the Punic Wars themselves into the great historical subject of *Aeneid* 1 and 4, diverting the attention from the allegory of the Civil Wars which is simultaneously present in the episode. On the other hand, however, especially in Dido's curse and in the imaginary fall of Carthage which seals the episode, the Civil Wars come out of the picture as if tied in a Gordian knot with the Carthaginian conflict, reminding Roman readers that it was precisely the destruction of Carthage that brought about the crisis of the Republic and the internal enemies of Rome. Such an interpretation is all the more buttressed by the readers' eventual arrival at the Civil Wars-like war in Latium, which is itself presented in the poem as the direct consequence of Dido's curse.

Readers interested in establishing Virgil's stand in terms of the old anti- or pro-Augustan debate will soon clash with the simultaneous availability of both readings: on the one hand, the continuous evocation of Civil War can be thought to convey Virgil's 'further voice' of dissent and unmask the horrors on which the Augustan regime is founded,<sup>3</sup> but it can also be reinscribed within the language of Augustan ideology and signify the very necessity and prerequisite for the founding of the Principate, which needed to 'destroy' the degenerate

<sup>3</sup> See as seminal studies Parry (1963), Johnson (1976), Lyne (1987).

late Republic in order to start ‘constructing’ anew.<sup>4</sup> Scholars interested in recovering Virgil’s intention can therefore either argue that Virgil’s reminder of the price to pay for the *pax Augusta* attempts to dismantle the optimistic vision of world conquest offered by the glittering surface of the *Aeneid*, or instead posit that Virgil’s Civil War echoes are deliberately juxtaposed with that vision in order to magnify the achievement of the Augustan *pax*. Similarly, readers of ‘further voices’ in the *Aeneid*, emphasising the sympathetic portrait of Dido, may interpret the comparison between Dido’s death and Carthage’s destruction as expressing Virgil’s anti-imperialistic stance, while optimistic readers could emphasise that Dido’s death is the price to pay for the foundation of Rome – a city that will eventually triumph over its most formidable enemy. Moreover, the momentary juxtaposition with Antony can be seen to undermine the moral stance of proto-Augustan Aeneas, or even to suggest interchangeability between Antony and Octavian, since either winner would eventually become (a) Caesar. But at the same time the development of the plot also suggests the opposite: namely that Aeneas/Augustus is no Antony, because if Aeneas had behaved like Antony, Rome would have never been founded.

The simultaneous availability of these options highlights both the polysemy of Virgil’s text and the ‘doublethink’ of the literary and ideological system of which the *Aeneid* is simultaneously creation and creator. But while this consideration may run the risk of leaving us into aporetic conclusions, I think that it is precisely Virgil’s Carthage episode that offers us a viable way out from the whole debate, and it does so by highlighting the degree of fiction exploited in the whole construct, and thus unmasking the construct, and the ideology itself, for the artificial forgery that it really is. Virgil does this in *Aeneid* 4 by allotting a place of honour for his monstrous character of *Fama*, who is ‘Rumour’, ‘Tradition’, ‘Fiction’ – or, from a political point of view, ‘Truth-Twisting’, ‘Revisionist History’,

<sup>4</sup> See Morgan (1998) and (1999) for the idea of civil war as ‘constructive destruction’.

‘Propaganda’, ‘Ideological Construct’ and perhaps what today (post-2016) is referred to as ‘Post-Truth Discourse’.

Virgil’s monstrous *Fama* comes on stage (*A.* 4.173–97) suggesting that the contents of *Aeneid* 4 are a mixture of truth and falsehood (*A.* 4.190 *facta atque infecta*): both the fictional meeting between Aeneas and Dido in the *Aeneid*, and the allegory behind that meeting, namely the rumours spread about Antony and Cleopatra, amplified by pro-Octavian’s ‘propaganda’. In doing so, the Carthage episode in the *Aeneid* comes dangerously close to the products of those rewriters – and destroyers – of history who fuelled false conspiracy theories at the dawn of the totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century, and who thus created, according to Hannah Arendt, ‘gigantic lies and monstrous falsehoods ... so that the difference between truth and falsehood may cease to be objective and become a mere matter of power and cleverness, of pressure and infinite repetition’.<sup>5</sup>

In conclusion, all the perfumes of Arabia can be found incapable of sweetening the pain of the Romans’ collective memory, if simply because they end up revealing themselves for what they really are: nothing more than perfumes. This is why, no matter how persuasively we manage to stress the orientalising presentation of this barbarian Carthage, all these paintings of conquered barbarians eventually show themselves for the nostalgic mirage that they embody: the ‘empty picture’ at which Aeneas stares amid his ‘river of tears’ (*A.* 1.464–5 *animum pictura pascit inani | multa gemens, largoque umectat flumine uultum*). Ultimately, those barbarians presented in the poetry of the Empire on the *Georgics*’ theatre-temple – ‘all the conquered cities of Asia, the subdued Niphates, the Parthian trusting in his flight’ (*G.* 3.30–1 *urbes Asiae domitas pulsumque Niphaten | fidentemque fuga Parthum*), and especially the inwoven Britons (*G.* 3.25 *intexti ... Britanni*), reveal themselves to be nothing but an empty mirror image, a shadow of things gone, and a mirage of what is to come.<sup>6</sup> Ovid, Virgil’s first

<sup>5</sup> Arendt (2004) 441.

<sup>6</sup> See Giusti (forthcoming).

successor, will not fail to pick up these echoes of Civil War when introducing his readers to the theatricality of his 'barbarian' third book of the *Metamorphoses* (*Met.* 3.111–12), in which figures woven into the rising curtain are compared to the Sown Men, the autochthonous barbarians waging war on one another in the city of Thebes, another literary anti-Rome, which is mapped, in the *Metamorphoses*, onto the original 'shadow self' of Rome: Carthage in Virgil's *Aeneid*.<sup>7</sup>

The theatrical ecphraseis of the temples in the *Georgics* and *Aeneid* become the textual correspondent, in the early imperial era, of that theatrical stage experienced by the mid-Republican Romans as the locus of formation, appropriation and contestation of their collective identity.<sup>8</sup> But if that identity could be constantly renegotiated in the mid-Republic, the stakes seem to be much higher for the post-Civil War Romans. In the *Aeneid*, the scenes on Juno's temple mark the moment of recognition, or ἀναγνώρισις, when Aeneas 'recognised himself, mixed with the leaders of the Achaeans' (*A.* 1.488 *se quoque principibus permixtum agnouit Achiuis*), remembering either the betrayal of his own country and roots in exchange for a pact with the Greeks, or the image that he will later recall to Dido in Book 2: of himself, a Trojan, dressed like a Greek among the Greeks (2.396 *uadimus immixti Danais*, 'we proceed, mixed in with the Greeks'). While both recollections are redolent of the Romans' long negotiation of their cultural identity in relationship to the Greeks, in the early Augustan age this also becomes the moment when the mythical curtain of the paradigmatic war between East and West falls to the stage floor, signalling the start of the real tragedy: that of a people at war with themselves, which is the real 'unspeakable pain' (*A.* 2.3 *infandus dolor*), and the real 'tears of things' (*A.* 1.462 *lacrimae rerum*).

<sup>7</sup> See P. Hardie (1990) 226 n. 14 and more generally on Ovid's Thebes as an anti-Rome, Barchiesi–Rosati (2007) 142.

<sup>8</sup> The two temples are often analysed in tandem: see most recently Kirichenko (2013) and Heslin (2015).



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